

ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 2024  
JULIA JESSEL  
STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR FOR NEEDWOOD DIVISION

My annual report outlines just a few of the achievements of Staffordshire County Council and some of the challenges in the future.

As many of you will have heard, I retired in February 2024 from my cabinet role for Health & Care. This is part of my planned retirement from being a councillor, as it is my intention to retire fully in May 2025, at the next county council elections. In total, I will have served local communities as an elected member for 43 years.

Against the backdrop of high inflation, ongoing impact of the pandemic and a cost-of-living pressures, the council was able to deliver a balanced budget in February. Managing high Adult Social Care demand, while exceeding targets for timeliness, and implementing plans for tackling Children's Social Care demand has also been achieved.

Over £72,000 has been awarded for local initiatives to help combat climate change and since declaring a climate change emergency SCC has reduced their carbon emissions by 50%.

14 Household Waste Recycling Centres are successfully operating following transfer back to the council from the private sector. Staffordshire sends only 1% of household waste to landfill.

50,335 Holiday Activities and Food places made available, with 75% take up as part of our programme of support for young people and families.

SCC has again maintained a high level of pupil choice of schools, with 95% of pupils going to their first choice and 99% one of their three choices. A total of £56 million will be spent on building new schools and maintaining and improving existing ones in Staffordshire over the coming year, this includes building new primary schools in Stafford, Tamworth, East Staffordshire and Lichfield.

The total number of claimants in the county now stands at 3.0% of the working age population. This continues to be far lower than the average for the region of 5.1%, and the average for England of 4.0%. SCC continues to support those residents that unfortunately find themselves out of work to access employment through our dedicated Jobs Brokerage service and access to training and jobs through the Careers Hub.

SCC has been successful and secured a Local Visitor Economy Partnership status for the area which will work to support and grow the visitor economy and has the potential to bring significant benefits to the county, including through access to support and future funding programmes.

I continue to organise the Needwood Division Forum and the next date will be arranged for May- June 2024. Representatives from SCC Highways Dept, local PCSOs will be attending, and I am trying to secure a representative of Severn Trent as well. This meeting will give councillors the opportunity to discuss highways, flooding and law enforcement issues. The forum was instrumental in putting forward views on the Local Government Boundary Review

for County Divisions. Unfortunately, the final decision has been delayed allowing for further consultation for Lichfield based divisions.

I send regular updates to all the parish councils in the Needwood Division on local temporary road closures required for repairs or works being undertaken by various utility companies and National Highway works on the A38.

I regularly attend the Drakelow Development Liaison meetings. Through these meetings I became aware that the Walton Bridge as originally designed, would no longer meet up to date requirements and would have a detrimental impact on the level of flooding of the Barton Brook and properties in Barton. Also, the access road from Barton would regularly be under up to 1 metre of flood water. Barton Parish Councillors and myself, supported by SCC Engineers and the Environment Agency ensured that the developers CPUK redesigned the bridge, raising the height of the span, improving the design of the parapets and access road to mitigate the impact of the new structure. These proposals are currently being considered by the 2 highways authorities in Staffordshire and Derbyshire.

As your local county councillor, I will continue to work with all the parish councils in the division. I appreciate that highways defects are of significant concern to local residents as indeed they are to me. Whilst the council again increases the highways budget and county councillors press for improvements in the quantity and quality of work, inflationary pressures have meant that the level of improvements has not yet materialised. However, with a new Chief Executive at SCC and a new Cabinet Member for Highways, I am hopeful that 2024/5 will see the desired improvements.

Cllr Julia Jessel  
2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024

**Barton under Needwood Parish Council -Appointment of Officers to Committees**  
**(Chairman a member of all Committees)**

<b>Committees</b>	<b>Officers Elected 2023-2024 (Committee Chairman underlined)</b>
Finance	Up to 5 Meet quarterly
Planning	Up to 5 Co-option: R. Bell Meet fortnightly Mondays 5pm – Committee has delegated responsibilities to comment on applications due to time scales.
-Sub Committee -Strategic Planning	1 + other Cllrs called as required when needed dependant on issue Co-option: R. Bell
-Rural Services Network	All members of BPC + Co-option: R. Bell
-Human Resources including Health & Safety & Emergency Planning	Up to 5 + Clerk Meet as required Draft Policies Working Party: C. Walker; J. Brookes
-Safeguarding Officer	1 (to be appointed) + Clerk
Allotments	X 3 Co-option: G Hughes - allotment secretary; Meet on site as required
Burial Ground	Up to 5 + Clerk Meet as required
-Parks and Open Spaces: Collinson Park, Ash Tree Pocket Park, Gilmour Lane, Potters Way, St James Garden	K McInerney, I Gilbey, J Taylor, L Young Meet as required Other volunteers for projects as and when needed
-Fishpond Sub-Committee	X 4 Meet as required Co-option: Simon Darby; Mark Jackson
Village Enhancement	Up to 5 Meet as required Co-option: volunteers for special projects as and when needed.
Communications	General: x 4 + Clerk Housing Needs Survey: x 3 Green Spaces Survey analysis: x 1 Meet as required
<b>Outside Bodies Representatives:</b>	
Holland Sports Club	X 2 + Clerk Cllr attendance required once every 3 months
Quarries Liaison	X 1
Barton & Dunstall Key Trust	X 1
Village Hall	X 3
<b>Special Responsibilities:</b>	
Speedwatch	Alison Jones to file report.
Flagpole	Co-option: G Taylor, Rev A Simpson
Cheque Signatories	6 : Clerk; E Sharkey; J Taylor; D Lord; S Naylor; C Walker
Internal Auditor	Alan Toplis Associates
Flood Risk Group	X 2
Family Festival	X 1
Walton By Pass Bridge	X 1

A Meeting of **Barton-under-Needwood Parish Council Finance Committee** was held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 at 6:30pm, Barton Village Hall, Crowberry Lane, Barton under Needwood.



**Attendees:** James Brookes, Derek Lord, Steve Naylor (Chair), Siobhan Rumsby (Clerk/RFO), Ed Sharkey, Jeannette Taylor, Lindy Young

**Apologies:** None

1. The documents provided by the Clerk relating to 2023/24 were reviewed with the following points being noted:
  - 1.1. A surplus of £2211 was achieved for the financial year 2023/24. We close the year with net funds of £96,773.
  - 1.2. It was agreed that we should attempt to get a budgetary estimate for car park re-surfacing to inform our position on reserves.
  - 1.3. Next steps for 2023/24 financials: (1) Internal Audit in May (2) Review and approval by Parish Council in June. If the Internal Audit highlights any significant changes or issues, we will re-convene the FC to review and agree a way forward.
  - 1.4. Asset Register: In line with good practice, items that have been gifted to the parish are recorded on the asset register with a value of £1. However, these items are insured for a realistic cost of replacement. Generally, we will fund the replacement of most assets through the annual budget, on an as-required basis. We will identify items where replacement cost would be problematic within an annual budget and consider creating reserves to cover those items (which are expected to be very small in number). The Asset Register will be updated to reflect this.

## 2. Presentation of financials for Open Meeting

The meeting agreed to prepare three charts showing:

- (1) Where our money comes from (e.g. Precept, Grants, Allotments)
- (2) How we plan to spend the money in 2024
- (3) Impact of our income and expenditure plan on reserves

The chair of the FC agreed to draft these charts and circulate to members of the committee for their review.

## 3. Risk Assessment

The Chair of the FC circulated proposed amendments to the financial risks contained within the overall BPC Risk Assessment document. It was agreed that members of the committee would review and propose further changes as necessary. The chair of the FC will then produce a new version containing the agreed proposed changes.

## 4. Allotments

- 4.1. The SCC contract for lease of land does not require SCC to raise an Invoice before payment by BPC. It was agreed that this may cause administrative problems, not least because SCC processes do not allow for payment without an Invoice. It was agreed that Councillor Brookes will draft an amendment to the contract and the Allotments Committee will attempt to get the amendment agreed by SCC.
- 4.2. There is potentially work required to reinforce the track that leads to the allotments as it is showing signs of deterioration. Councillor Lord agreed that he would mark up the crack with

some 'tell tales' to see if there was any change over the coming months. If it looks there might be, then Allotments Committee to review and take advice on what repairs might be necessary and how they might be done. Likely to be necessary either to use money from reserves to deal with this if need be within the current financial year, or include in budget for 2025.

4.3. It was agreed that under the contract with SCC the maintenance of this track is the responsibility of BPC. It was agreed that the Allotments Committee will obtain an estimate for the necessary repairs.

5. Investment Strategy

The Clerk circulated a document defining good practice for local government investment strategies. It was agreed that Councillor Naylor would draft an Investment policy for BPC, based on the principles already agreed at the previous FC.

6. Petty Cash

It was agreed to discontinue the use of the Petty Cash fund in line with the JPAG practitioners guide.

7. Next meeting: was agreed for 15<sup>th</sup> July 2024 at 6:30pm

Barton Parish Council		S. Rumsby	RFO	31-Mar-24					
<b>Budget v Receipts &amp; Payments 2023-2024</b>									
Local Authority Precept	81000								
<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Last Year 2022-23</b>	<b>Budget 2023-24</b>	<b>Actual to date</b>	<b>Year End Projection</b>	<b>Diff Proj v Budget</b>	<b>% variance</b>	<b>Comments Significant variances</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>73,587</b>	<b>44,093</b>	<b>75,508</b>	<b>75,508</b>	<b>31,415</b>	<b>71</b>			
Local Authority Grant/Other	1,865	1,865	1,865	1,865	0	0.00			
Burial Ground	15,481	12,000	14,150	14,150	2,150	17.92	Increased numbers for memorial wall/scattering service		
Allotments	1,038	1,613	1,288	1,288	-325	-20.16			
Fishing	2,784	3,000	3,077	3,077	77	2.57			
Interest	244	30	1,613	1,613	1,583	5277.63	Interest rates have increased		
Holland Sports Club Lease	0	200	450	450	250	125.00	Rent offset by HSC Insurance premium which increased significantly		
Grants	20,358	0	8,683	8,683	8,683		Key Trust grant for Toddler Park 6k		
VAT Reimbursement	9,862	3,000	4,425	4,425	1,425	47.50	Based on 2022-23 spend		
Car Park	9,368	10,192	10,108	10,108	-84	-0.83			
Village Hall	12,587	12,193	12,976	12,976	783	6.42			
Other	0	0	173	173	173		Scrap value for copper reclaimed and bank compensation		
Virements:			700	700			Ring Fenced Funds for Sluice gate June 23		
			10,000	10,000			Ring Fenced Mercers Funding for Toddler Park Oct 23		
			6000	6,000			BPC funds for Toddler Park		
<b>Payments</b>	<b>Last Year 2022-23</b>	<b>Budget 2023-24</b>	<b>Actual to date</b>	<b>Year End Projection</b>	<b>Diff Proj v Budget</b>	<b>% variance</b>	<b>Comments</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>107,417</b>	<b>151,122</b>	<b>154,297</b>	<b>154,297</b>	<b>3,175</b>	<b>2</b>			
Staff costs	49,948	58,000	54,148	54,148	-3,852	-6.64	Living wage increase 9.7%. NJC agreement flat rate awarded £1925 (pro ratad)		
Lengthsman	2,570	2,750	2,809	2,809	59	2.15	Increase in line with national minimum wage		
Village Hall contra	12,463	10,297	13,079	13,079	2,782	27.02			
Admin / T&D/Professional	7,741	10,000	8,877	8,877	-1,123	-11.23	Subs, office supplies, rent, phone, stationery, postage, insurance, website, T&D, audit, legal		
Election	1,875	1,875	1,875	1,875	0	0.00	Annual estimated costs towards future elections (£7,500)		
Donations & S137 payments	386	500	658	658	158	31.60	HSC donation offset by rent (10% of their increased insurance premium)		
Bank Charges	188	200	199	199	-1	-0.36			
Capital Expenditure	238	1,500	1,894	1,894	394	26.29	Equipment replacement, mower purchased and office printer replaced		
Maintenance / Repairs )	1,456	1,000	3,328	3,328	2,328	232.82	Gilvar lining of Potters Way £663 and Noticeboard repairs £325		
General	114	500	169	169	-331	-66.20	GPC payments		
Burial Ground	3,946	2,250	4,864	4,864	2,614	116.17	Budget exceeded, figure includes memorial wall paques which are recouped, virement required		
Parks & Open Spaces	12,120	33,500	26,292	26,292	-7,208	-21.52	vired £10k + 6000		
Fishpond	6,200	18,500	18,771	18,771	271	1.46	£700 vired from Earmarked Funds for Sluice 28/6/23; £10,000 vired from fishing pegs EMR fund		
Allotments	1,913	1,460	1,412	1,412	-48	-3.27			
Car Park	988	1,200	2,600	2,600	1,400	116.68	Electricity bill - lighting over 2 years £862; Gilvar Lining 655		
Village Enhancement	739	1,590	1,072	1,072	-518	-32.60	Provision for village events (vired £590 for Coronation event 10.5.23)		
Other Projects	758	0	1,270	1,270	1,270		Coronation spend funded by BDKT		
VAT	4,476	6,000	10,979	10,979	4,979	82.98			
Precept 2023-2024	81,000		<b>Bank Balances as at:</b>		<b>31-Mar-24</b>		<b>Earmarked Future Provision 2023-24</b>		
Less Projected Payments	154,297		Lloyds Current A/C		2,015.00		<b>Ring-fenced Reserves</b>		
<b>Draw on Reserves</b>	<b>-73,297</b>		Lloyds Deposit A/C		74,372.32		Car Park Maintenance & Resurface		£35,000.00
			Petty Cash		150.00		Land Drainage Collinson Park		£3,000.00
Projected Income	75,508		National Savings		74,494.67		Full Brook Clearance funds (SCC)		£426.80
<b>Projected Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>2,211</b>						Election expenses		£1,875.00
									<b>£40,301.80</b>
Working Capital	76,487		<i>Less unrepresented cheque.</i>		50.00				
General Reserve	74,495		<i>Plus credits outstanding</i>		-				
Ring-fenced Reserves	40,302		Total		<b>150,981.99</b>				
Minimum Reserve	37,000								
<b>Net Funds</b>	<b>96,773</b>								
<b>PRECEPT CALCULATION</b>									
Net Expenditure less Grant from ESBC = Precept divided by Taxbase = Average Band D Parish Tax Rate									
	Expenditure	Estimated Grant	Precept	Taxbase	Parish Rate		Diff	%	
2023/2024	82865.00	1865	81000.00	1968	41.16		2.35	6.06	
2022/2023	77865.00	1865	76000.00	1958.4	38.81		5.93	18.03	

**Barton under Needwood Parish Council - Receipts and Payments Monthly Summary**  
2024-2025

Receipts	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total	Budget	Budget Balance
Rents	1,200.00	270.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,470.00		
Interest	77.93	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	77.93		
ESBC	40,722.24	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	40,722.24		
LA Other	932.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	932.50		
Burial Ground	1,185.00	750.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,935.00	16,000	-14,065
Fishpond	180.00	115.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	180.00	3,100	-2,920
VAT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Car Park	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Grants/donations	0.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.00		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>44,297.67</b>	<b>1,185.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>45,482.67</b>		

Payments	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total	Budget	Budget Balance
Bank Charges	7.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.00		
Salaries	3,424.59	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,424.59		
Lengthsmen	206.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	206.00		
HMRC	1,314.12	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,314.12		
Nest Pensions	196.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	196.00		
Admin	1,019.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,019.94		
Burial Ground	204.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	204.17	2,385.00	2,180.83
Allotments	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,200.00	2,200.00
Fishpond	98.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	98.00	4,000.00	3,902.00
Donations	75.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	75.00		
P&OS	80.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	80.00	11,900.00	11,820.00
Capital Exp	533.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	533.00		
Maintenance	665.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	665.78		
Car Park	91.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	91.52		
General payments	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Projects	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
VEC	228.36	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	228.36	2,500.00	2,271.64
VAT	294.71	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	294.71		
<b>Total Spend</b>	<b>8,438.19</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>8,438.19</b>		

**Barton under Needwood Parish Council****Bank Reconciliation as per statements at:**

01-May-24

Lloyds Current A/C	£	3,186.00	
Lloyds Deposit (Instant Access) A/C	£	110,195.80	
National Savings	£	74,494.67	
Petty Cash	£	150.00	
<b>Total Bank Balances</b>			<b>£ 188,026.47</b>

**Add Credits not on Statement**£0.00 **£ 188,026.47****Less unrepresented payments:-**£0.00 **£ 188,026.47****Opening Balances :-****Bank Statements as at 31st March 2023**

Lloyds Current A/C	£	1,965.00
Lloyds Deposit A/C	£	74,372.32
National Savings	£	74,494.67
Petty Cash	£	150.00

Parish Council - **Total £ 150,981.99****Add Receipts to date** £ 45,482.67**Less Expenditure to date** £ 8,438.19**Total Cash and Investments as at -** **£ 188,026.47****Difference** £ -

RFO, S. Rumsby



**Barton under Needwood Parish Council -  
Schedule of Payments presented to Full Council**

02/05/2024

Payee	Description	£ Value Gross	£ VAT	£ NET
Salaries total		3,758.31		3,758.31 HR
Nest Pension Scheme		164.86		164.86 HR
HMRC		934.79		934.79 HR
Mitmark	CCTV	96.00	16.00	80.00 P&OS
Barton Village Hall	ad hoc meetings	42.00		42.00 Admin
S Gaynor	Summer bedding plants	450.00		450.00 P&OS
SPCA	Planning for non planners - DL	30.00		30.00 Admin
McAfee	Software	109.99		109.99 Admin
Country Services	Petrol and Safetywear	36.49	6.08	30.41 Maintenance
Reflex	Flyers	137.52		137.52 VEC
SPCA	Annual Subs incl NALC	599.00		599 Admin
A. Davies	Reimbursement bags	5.67		5.67 P&OS
				<b>6,342.54</b>

<u>Quotes to consider</u>	Description	£	VAT	£
	Tree Work at Fishpond			
	Quote 1	1,200.00	200	1,000.00 Fishpond
	Quote 2	850.00		850.00 Fishpond

SCC Data Protection Service	Gap Analysis (one off)	178.00		178.00 Admin
per annum	Tier 1	183.00		183.00 Admin
per annum	Tier 2	293.00		293.00 Admin
per annum	Tier 3	523.00		523.00 Admin

Notifications:

**Rural Village Services Group**

New subscription charge from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 = £50 Decision deferred to May meeting

Burton Skip Hire Price Review:

Dear Sir or Madam  
Price Review 2024 - Skip Hire to Burton on Trent Area

Firstly, I would like to thank you for being such a loyal and consistent customer. 2023 has been another extremely challenging year in our industry, with exceptionally high-cost inflation, rapidly increasing energy cost, the Reform of Red Diesel, increase in vehicle maintenance costs and an increase in wages for our staff. Although we continue to mitigate and absorb the increased costs where possible, the pressure from external market forces and legislation have influenced the price increases to our products and services with effect from 1st May 2024.

Mini £123.33  
Midi £162.50  
5yd £237.50  
Large £275.00  
12yd £383.33  
14yd £412.50

Prices subject to vat at the current rate.

We pride ourselves on the high standards of our operation and the service we provide for all our clients. Although the price increase is minimal, it is necessary to continue to provide you with the quality of service you have come to expect from us. Burton Skip Hire is fully committed to working with you to help increase the volume of material that you are recycling, securing sustainable secondary markets for our recycled materials and avoiding landfill.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact us and again would like to thank you for your business and ongoing support throughout the year and look forward to working with you throughout 2024.

Yours sincerely  
Burton Skip Hire Limited

PLANNING\_ – All matters have been referred to the Planning Committee and their comments appear in italics below, the Committee meet fortnightly 5pm, in the Douglas Room, Barton Village Hall. Please contact the clerk for dates should you wish to attend any Planning Meetings

1. Oaklands Farm Solar Limited : Notice of Acceptance of an application for a Development Consent Order (“DCO”) by the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) under Section 56 of the Planning Act 2008 – interested parties right to make representations

*To the best of our knowledge this is the first time we have been consulted on this proposal. We, therefore, apologise in advance if the issues we set out below have already been considered. If indeed that is the case, then we would be grateful if we could be referenced to appropriate documents.*

*The proposal is for a large solar farm located in a kind of inverted T-shaped area to the east of Walton on Trent and to the west of Rosliston. The main body of the proposal appears to lie in an area to the south-west of Rosliston.*

*As the proposal is substantial, we understand that it falls into the category of a nationally significant infrastructure project which requires a Development Consent Order and will be determined by the Secretary of State and not South Derbyshire District Council, as Local Planning Authority.*

*As an adjoining Staffordshire Parish Council, we admit that we are not directly affected but, having now read some of the material, we would like to set out a number of issues: -*

**The loss of agricultural land** – *From what we have read about the national guidance for solar farms, we understand that it favors previously developed, brownfield sites, industrial land and low-grade agricultural land. There appears to have been no consideration of such alternative previously developed locations and their reasons for rejection before focusing on this present site. We understand the convenience of the National Grid hub nearby at the former Drakelow coal fired power station. That site is brownfield as is the nearby former Willington power station site also with National Grid connection.*

*We, therefore, do not know the justification for this particular site, and why greenfield land is the only option. We do not know the agricultural classification of this agricultural land. There appears to be no information about whether even with the solar farm any continued agricultural use might be viable, including any opportunity to improve biological diversity with suitable planting within the site;*

**The need for agricultural land vs renewable energy** – *As the country is currently experiencing a cost of living crisis with food inflation at a very high level, with imported food shortages much more an issue now than at this time in 2022, we would have thought that there was a priority to retain as much agricultural land as possible. We also support the move to be carbon neutral and, therefore, we feel that this proposal raises the question about how do you make a decision between two laudable objectives. The information we have received and read relates to the practicalities of the proposal and there is very little about its justification and, as a consequence, why solar power should be given precedence over an agricultural use;*

**Flexibility of any decision** – *We understand that solar farms are intended to be temporary structures and can be removed when no longer in use or required. In the light of the nation’s need for food we were wondering if conditions could be attached to Development Consent Orders so that there was some flexibility to revert all or part of the site to agriculture should it be required in the national interest;*

**Reflection issues** – *Whilst we assume that most panels will be south facing, can they be maneuvered so as to face the sun as a means of capturing the optimum energy at any point in time? If that is the case, then is the sun’s reflection on the panels likely to cause health and safety problems or hazards? We are mindful of the village being located to the west of the site;*

**Security issues** – *is there likely to be any issues regarding security fencing and any light pollution? We are aware of a solar farm at Tutbury, for example, which seems to use drones for surveillance purposes. Will that be the case in this location?*

**Who benefits from the energy?** – *Recently Government politicians supporting fracking, for example, have suggested that there may be some local cost benefits in terms of reduced energy bills for those communities supporting such proposals. Whilst we note the community benefits fund to support local projects, could the wider benefits of the proposal to the particular local area be more clearly delineated?*

**Public Footpaths** -*We understand the footpaths in the area of the site are popular with walkers from Barton. We see on your landscaping strategy plan that the public rights of way are marked. We presume therefore that they will be retained and would like reassurance on this.*

**Traffic impacts** – *we assume that the proposal for the solar farm was partly predicated on the construction of the Walton bypass as a means of mitigating the impact of both construction and operational traffic. As a local Parish Council, we are particularly concerned at a noticeable increase in through traffic in the village in recent years. Please can you provide any assurances the construction or operational traffic will not use our village? The necessary delay to the construction of the Walton Bypass and associated river crossing and the restrictions on the A513 Chetwynd Bridge at Alrewas will require heavy construction traffic to approach the site through already largely unsuitable rural roads within South Derbyshire.*

2. 00284 - 10 Meadow Rise : Conversion of rear part of garage to 'winter garden' structure; erection of rear and front single storey extensions with pitched roofs, alteration of front dormer window to create pitched roof gable with weatherboard cladding (Revised Scheme) – *no objections*
3. 00184 - 82 Mill Lane : Erection of first floor side extensions, part two storey part single storey rear extension, single storey front and rear porch extensions and external alterations – *no objections*
4. 00247 - Barley Fields, Dunstall Lane, Stoneyford : Erection of two storey front and rear, single storey side, part first floor part two storey side extensions with Juliet balconies to the rear, dormer windows to the front and installation of an external staircase to the side, rendering and cladding – *no comments*
5. 00313 - Land North of Station Lane and west of Walton on Trent : development of new road layout to facilitate proposed amendments to bridge over the river Trent and Walton-on-Trent bypass
6. 00356 - 43 Station Road : Fell to ground level one Eucalyptus tree (T1).  
*We have no objection to this felling but do ask that the applicant is encouraged to replant with an appropriate species.*
7. 00269 - Forest Thorn Farmhouse, Scotch Hills Lane : Conversion and alterations of agricultural building to form a single dwelling  
*This application is for the conversion of a barn at the rear of frontage barns along Scotch Hills. The frontage barns are in the process of being converted and the proposal for this barn is a revised design. Planning permission has already been given for the development in principle (P/2024/00465). A design was also approved as part of that proposal.*

*The applicant's Design Statement notes that following a market study and design review it was concluded that an alternative design would enhance the site and hence the reason for this revised application. Currently, the application site comprises a steel structure with blockwork and cladding on three sides with the fourth open to the elements. The roof has fibrous cement sheets. The proposed design harmonises with its setting and reflects its former agricultural use and makes a positive impact on the surrounding landscape.*

*The proposal retains the steel frame and incorporates insulated cladding panels and timber cladding laid in a vertical alignment to reflect the current barn's style. The Design Statement indicates that windows are strategically placed and used sparingly so as not to domesticate the building.*

*The Parish Council had previously objected to the principle of development on the grounds that allowing residential development would be tantamount to a new build project. This was rejected by ESBC.*

*We were surprised that ESBC had approved the design accompanying this proposal. We felt that it was pedestrian and lacked inspiration. It required a far more sensitive and subtle design to better reflect its surroundings especially with the brick built barns on the road frontage. As such we felt that it would detract from as opposed to making a positive contribution to this rural environment. We also note that the applicant's Design Statement described the previous design as, perhaps diplomatically, "underwhelming".*

*In comparison we are wholly supportive of this proposed design which demonstrates the creativity and flair that we felt was needed in this location. To our minds, this highlights an issue of what high quality design actually looks like under the terms of Policy SP 24. Here the policy notes an imperative that all proposals must contribute positively to the area in which they are located. They must help to create a sense of place and reflect their, in this case, rural character. The Case Officer's report noted that in terms of its design the proposal would not be unduly prominent or harmful to its rural setting. We feel that doing no harm is a neutral phrase and not the same as making a positive contribution, which is pro-active. On reflection, and particularly in comparison with this current proposal we wonder if ESBC had set too low a standard for high quality design.*

*We raise this issue of design because we feel there is a world of difference between what was previously approved and this current proposal. So how can the first be considered in the same breath as the current one and both be regarded as high quality design? We hope that by raising this issue we can initiate a debate internally in ESBC about how the criteria in Policy SP 24 is applied in practice. This is important because the ESBC Design Guide provides excellent guidelines to help interpret what making a positive contribution actually means.*

*The Parish Council therefore supports this application.*

8. P/2020/00430 - Land to the east of Efflinch Lane and north of Mill Lane : Revised Application under Section 106a of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) to modify the Section 106 Agreement dated 20th May 2013 in respect of P/2011/01359 for an outline application to develop land by the erection of up to 130 dwellings with associated open space, comprising parkland, re-contouring, open water and allotments [UPDATE to POS Managed Lands Plan, Maintenance Schedule and Management Areas Plan]

*We confirm that the amended documents were approved by Barton Parish Council in April 2023 and we have no objection to this application as it is now presented.*

*We do however have one concern. In the original s106 agreement it reads as if all of the undeveloped land, with the exception of "allotments" was to be transferred to ESBC. We understand that now, apart from the specific play area and "allotments", the open space is to be transferred to the management company. We are not sure the wording of the s106 agreement now covers this amendment to the original intentions.*

9. 00300 - 120 Captains Lane : Replacement bungalow

*We have no objection to the proposed extension apart from the rather plain front elevation.*

*The existing frontage and that of the adjacent similar row of bungalows in this section of Captains Lane are notable for their "notched" fronts. They have a large window, set back from the main building line beneath a slightly overhanging roof and with a section of cladding.*

*The proposed flat frontage detracts from the overall street scene in this area rather than making a positive contribution in accordance with SP24*

*We therefore object to this application in its current form.*

10. 00372 - 78 Ash Tree Road : Erection of a single storey side and rear extension – *no objections*

ESBC Decisions – Permissions Granted

11. 00171 - 29 Causer Road : Part change of use of double garage and erection of a storm porch.  
12. 00319 - Walton Cricket Club, Station Lane : Consultation. Erection of a net to stop cricket balls landing on the proposed bypass at Walton Cricket Club, Station Lane, Walton-OnTrent, Swadlincote, DE12 8NA  
13. 00088 - 44 Main Street : Demolition of existing extension and outbuildings to facilitate the erection of a single storey extension to the North West elevation  
14. 00288 - Elm Tree House, 23 Wales Lane : Fell to ground level one Ash tree (T1) and one Ornamental Cherry tree (T2).

Correspondence

Resident correspondence re Concerns for Gower House & Unauthorised Development of Listed Building No10 Main Street – *circulated to Planning Committee*

## **Fishpond Spawning Motion 2024**

**Councillor James Brookes**

**Motion: Barton Fishpond to not close for a spawning period during 2024.**

### **Background**

As far as I am aware, the Fishpond started closing for a fish spawning period in 2019. Whilst it had been suggested that this happened yearly before and it was not therefore a new thing, I cannot recall it **ever** happening prior to 2019 for as long as I've been in the village. In 2019, I was also told that there were no data held by the PC on the subject of Barton Fishpond closure for spawning. In other words, there was no evidence regarding pre-2019.

Since what I believe to be its imposition in 2019, the closure period has taken place between May and June. I have therefore taken time to find additional evidence; namely the dates/pictures which are publicly available on Facebook from Fish 2013 (Fishing in Safe Hands), which record their sessions on the Fishpond. These evidence that they were fishing on Barton Fishpond during what would've been the spawning period closure (if there indeed was one back then) in May – June 2018. The dates are as follow:

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2018

9<sup>th</sup> May 2018

16<sup>th</sup> May 2018

21<sup>st</sup> May 2018

1<sup>st</sup> June 2018 (posted at 00.04am, presumably corresponding the evening preceding)

7<sup>th</sup> June 2018

14<sup>th</sup> June 2018

18<sup>th</sup> June 2018

23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> June 2018 Barton Family Festival - Teddy waterski event and fishing

4<sup>th</sup> July 2018

You will note that in all cases, there is less than 2 weeks' difference between these dates. It is not therefore conceivable that the pond could possibly have closed for 2 weeks for spawning in 2018. As such, the imposition of this closure in 2019 was surely new, which is consistent with my own recollections.

Given that Fish 2013 were fishing it with some frequency during the 2018 season, surely if the considerations of all the fish dying if you fish during a spawning period were true, then we would've expected to do a full restock of the fishpond in 2018/2019 from scratch. I have been advised that no fish have been stocked since before May

2018; this unequivocally demonstrates the lack of validity of any argument about all the fish dying.

### **Scientific Evidence**

I queried the scientific rationale for the imposition of a spawning closure in 2019 and I'm not aware there was any scientific evidence whatsoever of the validity of the proposed measure. As there was a lack of scientific evidence for the proposed measure in the first place (which I myself queried), I should not actually have the burden of proof to overturn this. Nevertheless, I have reviewed scientific evidence:

There was a study conducted in the late 1990s about a fishing closure period for spawning on canals (Hendry & Cragg-Hine, 1997). It looked at data from matches (fishing competitions) and also a Delphi study. A Delphi study is an iterative process of asking a panel of experts, with feedback shared with other experts, allowing inter-rater commenting and responses.

The findings of the study (see page 15; the Executive Summary of [https://aquadocs.org/bitstream/handle/1834/25206/81\\_EA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://aquadocs.org/bitstream/handle/1834/25206/81_EA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y)) were that angling during a (would be) closed period was **not detrimental to fish populations and there was therefore no justification for retaining a closed period** on canals. The views of the panel of experts were, by round 4 that it was not harmful at population level (see figure 6.4, where no-one indicates greater than 3 out of 5). The experts also suggested that more important features were canal boats and water quality.

### **Barton Practice**

The Barton closure in 2019 was for 2 weeks, since then the period of time for which the pond has been closed for spawning has been increased, for potentially up to a month. This would imply one of two things; it doesn't work on a 2-week basis or they want to increase an existing very small effect. I am not aware that they have surveyed the fish population since 2018. If they haven't surveyed the population and there is also no control group without a spawning period closure, they have no evidence to gauge the effectiveness of any measure.

It is also notable that spawning occurs at different times of year for different species of fish, meaning that closing for spawning for 2 weeks or a month will not prevent people fishing when any of the fish are spawning. This raises the question of why they've chosen when they have; presumably in connection with peak carp spawning. However, despite people already fishing when some fish are spawning under the current system, presumably great swathes of the fish population are not therefore dying.

### **Other Implications**

One of the implications of closing the fishpond for spawning is that it prevents fishing for all species of fish, regardless of whether or not they're spawning. This not only prevents people from fishing, but also denudes the fish of food, since people who are fishing throw in bait. During May – June, the water temperature is typically comparatively warm and the fish are active. As such, many of the fish are likely to be looking to feed, if they are not actively spawning. This is also true of fish who are pre-spawning.

If you prevent fishing, you prevent the provision of a meaningful amount of food to all fish. Moreover, fish will consume fish spawn/small fry, particularly if in a state of hunger. It is likely that Barton Fishpond has a high stocking density compared to canals, meaning this feature may be more salient compared to the Delphi study regarding canals. It is not obvious whether there has been any consideration of this, its implications and whether they are deleterious.

It is also of note that there are financial implications of the closure for spawning. The weather from May into June is often one of the best times of year. Indeed, last year's data indicate a large amount of the money from ticket sales occurred in May and then July (it was closed during June). If we are closing the pond for spawning, it means we are not generating revenue from an asset which needs upkeep and has Parishioners' money spent on it.

### **Local Practice**

I also took the opportunity to print screen the message put out by Burton Mutual Angling Association last year. Whilst they did close solely Branston Water Park for spawning, this was because it's a carp specialist water. They specifically did **not close several** other waters, as these were mixed species (i.e. more similar to Barton in this regard). Instead, **these waters remained fully open**. You can see their message below.



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying an article on the website [www.burtonmutual.co.uk](https://www.burtonmutual.co.uk). The article title is "Branston Water Park - Shut until 16th June 2023". The page features a navigation menu with links for Home, Our Club, Our Waters, Maps, Gallery, Club News, Membership & Tickets, and Matches. A large image shows a person holding a large carp. Below the image, the text reads: "We have made the decision to shut Branston water park to all fishing until 16th June 2023 this is to allow the fish on this water to spawn in peace. Other BMAA waters are still open to fishing. This decision has been made due to Branston being primarily a Carp fishery, other waters tend to have a more mixed stocking of other species." To the right of the article is a sidebar with sections for "NEWSLETTER" (1), "RESULTS" (2), and "Recent Posts". The recent posts include "Saddlesall lake - improved access arrangements", "Branston Water Park - Shut until 16th June - Spawning", "Burton Regatta 2023 - 8th and 9th July 2023", "Strictly No access is available on The River Trent during the close season", and "Scout Day at Manor Park - 16th July, 2023". A "Share this post" button is located below the article text. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 16:41 on 12/06/2023.

## Conclusion

As such, I am not aware of any scientific evidence in favour of closure for spawning. The scientific evidence in relation to canals suggests it makes no difference. Remaining open would be consistent with the practice of Burton Mutual Angling Association on mixed species venues (i.e. like Barton in this regard) last year and would return us to our own prior to 2019 position. Remaining open would also allay concerns from financial and fish welfare (lack of food) perspectives. Therefore, the motion is that Barton Fishpond should **not** close for spawning in 2024.

## References

Hendry, K., & Cragg-Hine, D. (1997). *Evaluation of the close season in canals*. Retrieved 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024 from [https://aquadocs.org/bitstream/handle/1834/25206/81\\_EA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](https://aquadocs.org/bitstream/handle/1834/25206/81_EA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y).

Minutes of **Barton under Needwood Parish Council Allotments Committee** Meeting which was held on Wednesday 17th April 2024 at 10:00am, Small Meeting Room, Barton Village Hall, Crowberry Lane, Barton under Needwood.



**Present:-** Councillors Derek Lord, James Brookes, Chris Allcock and Graham Hughes (Lettings Officer).

**Absent:-** Councillor Ed Sharkey

#### Appointment of a Chair of Committee

- Councillor Lord agreed to serve as the Chair of the Allotments Committee - **all in favour.**
- Councillor Brookes agreed to write the minutes of the meeting. **Action: Councillor Brookes to take and write up minutes.**

#### Position of the Allotments

- Graham gave the Committee an appraisal of the current status of lettings/the waiting list at the Allotments. He was currently going through the list and offering plots to people in order, given that a number of ploholders had decided not to renew their leases. There were currently 7 plots vacant.
- There was a discussion of whether we may look at removing the restriction to live in the Parish, if there were vacant plots after everyone on the waiting list had been offered one. The view of the Committee was, in order:
  1. Establish whether there are vacant plots left, after everyone the list has been offered one.
  2. If so, advertise the allotments to Parishioners, perhaps through the Chime.
  3. If there were still plots vacant at this point, the Committee could review the requirement to live in the Parish to join the waiting list.
- Graham raised the matter of a current ploholder who wanted to swap their plot for another one. The Committee was not aware of any issue with this, particularly as their existing plot was well tended and would therefore be easy to let to someone else. **All were in favour of letting the ploholder swap to another plot.**

#### Adding a Noticeboard/possible Plot Numbers

- The Committee was minded to replace the existing Noticeboard with a new one, as this was included in the budget for the current financial year – **all in favour. Action: Councillor Allcock to check with the Clerk about other Noticeboards being purchased by the Parish Council and whether we could tie in with those to get one for the Allotments.**
- Regarding possible numbers for plots, Councillor Allcock suggested we could put an anonymised version of the plot plan on the new Noticeboard, and that this may help people identify plot numbers.

#### Access Road

- A Parishioner had previously emailed in about cracks in the access road to the Allotments.
- Councillor Lord's view having inspected the site was that there is some movement in the ground near the brook. There may ultimately need to be some works to stabilise the bank, however these may be costly. He suggested three possible longer term solutions:
  1. Metal sheet piles and back filling behind them.
  2. Gabions (gravel filled cages) to prop up the bank.
  3. Grasscrete blocks against the bank, with the holes filled with topsoil.

- For the time being Councillor Lord suggested adding telltale pins to the road cracks, to monitor the situation and see how much change there is across time. This will tell us whether further action is needed. **Action: Councillor Lord to look into having telltale pins put into the Access Road.**
- If necessary, we can then look more formally into possible options for repair.
- We would also need to check whether the access road and/or bank supporting the access road is the responsibility of the Parish Council, or alternatively the County Council as they own the land.

#### Allotments Lease Contract

- Councillor Brookes mentioned clauses in the proposed Allotments Lease and that they would require the Parish Council to pay quarterly in advance, potentially without any invoice or lawful demand for payment. Members queried whether we could actually pay out money without an invoice. **Action: Councillor Brookes to check with the Clerk/Chair of Finance.**
- There was also a query raised by County regarding whether the Parish Council would still want the lease registered with the Land Registry. County had proposed a lease of just under 7 years to avoid the necessity of such a registration. Councillor Lord's view was that he could not see an issue with the lease not being registered with Land Registry, and that it would not be needed for the current arrangement to continue.

#### Any Further Reports

- Councillor Allcock raised a question about the current Bonfire guidance and how one would practically check about things such as air quality. His view was that we could do with rewording the guidance. **Action: Councillor Allcock to reword Bonfire guidance in collaboration with Graham and circulate.**
- Councillor Brookes asked about contact details for ploholders and whether we could ask for more email addresses for ease of communication. Whilst it was acknowledged that not everyone has email, it was agreed to ask the Clerk to write to ploholders for whom we don't have email addresses. We will ask whether they would mind providing an email address to help us keep them updated. **Action: Councillor Brookes to ask the Clerk to draft a letter to go out to relevant ploholders.**
- Dogs on Allotments were discussed. Whilst we are aware of some issues, there are also some ploholders who take their well behaved dog to the allotment with them. The Committee was minded to see if this problem persists.
- There was a view that the main issue this may stem from is whether unauthorised people are coming onto the allotments in general, potentially with dogs in tow. To this end, it was proposed we put up a sign along the lines of 'Private Land - Allotments Holders Only - No Access'.
- There was some debate about whether the end of the access road near the road would be the best place for this, or an existing post by the main gate. It was agreed that we could start with it near the gate as this would be the most straightforward option and could review moving it down later, if necessary. **Action: Councillor Allcock and Graham to look into getting a simple sign put together (perhaps laminated) and liaise with the Clerk.**
- Councillor Lord asked about an open meeting at the Allotments to meet allotment holders. Graham referred to a ploholder who has BBQs and invites other ploholders; this may be a way for Allotment Committee members to informally meet some ploholders. **Action: Graham to check with the BBQ organiser.**

- There was a discussion about plots which may not be being fully used. Graham is going to check on the status of plots with some other knowledgeable allotment holders before the end of May. Graham would then produce a list of plots lacking cultivation. There was some uncertainty amongst members regarding who had delegated authority to authorise the issuing of warning notices. **Action: Councillor Brookes to check the ToR and clarify.**
- The next meeting may be planned for in 3 months, but we may do emails instead depending whether it seems like we need a meeting. **Action: Councillor Brookes to organise meeting/dates, if a meeting is viewed as necessary.**

#### Closed Session

- The closed session matters were discussed and a course of action agreed.

Meeting closed at 11.15am.

**Adopted** by Barton under Needwood Parish Council at a meeting held on 2 May 2024  
Signed ... *Chairman*  
Signed *S. Rumsby, Clerk RFO*  
Review Date May 2024

## BARTON UNDER NEEDWOOD PARISH COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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## 1. GENERAL

- 1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders<sup>1</sup> 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; and
  - 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;

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<sup>1</sup> Model standing orders for councils is available from National Association of Local Councils

- determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
  - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
  - maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
  - assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
  - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.10. 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; and
  - 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; and
  - 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; and
- 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; and
- 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. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)**

2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.

2.2. 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 council.

- 2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 2.4. The council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be 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 for that purpose.
- 2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.6. 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;
  - to demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
  - have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.
- 2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
  - perform any operational duties for the council;
  - initiate or approve accounting 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.
- 2.8. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 2.9. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

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

### **3. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET) AND FORWARD PLANNING**

- 3.1. Each committee (if any) shall review its three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the council not later than the end of November each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.
- 3.2. The RFO must each year, by no later than December, prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by the Finance committee and the council.
- 3.3. The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.
- 3.4. The council shall fix the precept (council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved annual budget.
- 3.5. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

### **4. BUDGETARY CONTROL AND AUTHORITY TO SPEND**

- 4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:
- the council for all items over £5,000;
  - a duly delegated committee of the council for items over £500; or
  - the Clerk, in conjunction with Chairman of Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items below £500.

Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Clerk, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.

- 4.2. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').
- 4.3. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.
- 4.4. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in October for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chairman of Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 4.5. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £500. The Clerk shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.6. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 4.7. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.8. The RFO shall regularly provide the council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose "material" shall be in excess of £100 or 15% of the budget.
- 4.9. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

## **5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS**

- 5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.

- 5.2. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to council or finance committee. The council / committee shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by a resolution of the council or finance committee. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialled by the Chairman 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. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the council.
- 5.4. The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available council or Finance Committee meeting.
- 5.5. The Clerk/ RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:
- a) 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 and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee;
  - b) An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee; or
  - c) fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £10,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or finance committee.
- 5.6. For each financial year the Clerk/RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which council or a duly authorised committee, may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or Finance Committee.

- 5.7. A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is authorised - thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.
- 5.8. In respect of grants a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by council. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £5,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the council.
- 5.9. 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.
- 5.10. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.
- 5.11. Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved in writing by a Member.

## **6. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MAKING OF PAYMENTS**

- 6.1. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk/RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3. All payments shall be effected by cheque or other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of council or duly delegated committee.
- 6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council or committee shall be signed by two members of council and countersigned by the Clerk, in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.
- 6.5. 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.
- 6.6. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at a council or committee meeting (including immediately before or after such a meeting). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the council or Finance Committee at the next convenient meeting.

- 6.7. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.8. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items (principally salaries) may be made by banker's standing order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two members are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.9. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 6.10. If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.
- 6.11. Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chairman of Council in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.
- 6.12. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 6.13. 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.
- 6.14. 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.
- 6.15. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Clerk/RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of

payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.

- 6.16. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under “favourites”), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.17. 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 two of the Clerk/RFO and a member. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.
- 6.18. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk/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.
- 6.19. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the council Finance Committee. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the council and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the council.
- 6.20. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk/RFO and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.
- 6.21. The 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 RFO with a claim for reimbursement.
  - a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of £150 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.

## **7. PAYMENT OF SALARIES**

- 7.1. As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salary rates shall be as agreed by council, or duly delegated committee.
- 7.2. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.
- 7.3. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council/relevant committee.
- 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; or
  - d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.5. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 7.6. An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.
- 7.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by council.
- 7.8. Before employing interim staff the council must consider a full business case.



## **8. LOANS AND INVESTMENTS**

- 8.1. All borrowings shall be effected 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/Welsh Assembly Government (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. The council will arrange with the council's banks and investment providers for the sending of a copy of each statement of account to the Chairman of the council at the same time as one is issued to the Clerk or RFO.
- 8.4. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- 8.5. The council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 8.6. All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 8.7. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.8. Payments in respect of short term or long term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

## **9. INCOME**

- 9.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the 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 RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- 9.3. The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the Clerk.

- 9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6. 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 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 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.
- 9.10. Any income arising which is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Trustees of the charity, meeting separately from any council meeting (see also Regulation 16 below).

## **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 RFO.
- 10.3. All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, 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 RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the minutes can record the power being used.

## 11. CONTRACTS

11.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

- a. Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
  - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
  - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by 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 Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and
  - vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.
- b. Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) which is valued at £30,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations<sup>2</sup>.
- c. The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)<sup>3</sup>.
- d. 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.
- e. Such 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. The invitation shall in addition state that

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<sup>2</sup> The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

<sup>3</sup> Thresholds currently applicable are:

- a. For public supply and public service contracts £214,904
- b. For public works contracts £5,372,609

tenders must be addressed to the Clerk 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 in the presence of at least one member of council.
- g. Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Orders 18.d<sup>4</sup> and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- h. When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 and above £1000 the Clerk/RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.
- i. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- j. 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 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 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 council and Clerk to the contractor in writing, the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

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<sup>4</sup> Based on NALC's model standing order 18d

### **13. STORES AND EQUIPMENT**

- 13.1. The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.
- 13.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 13.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 13.4. The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

### **14. ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES**

- 14.1. The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £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 shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council with a full business case.

- 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 the annual risk assessment (per Regulation 17), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.
- 15.2. The RFO must take into account all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 15.3. The 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 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 members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by the council, or duly delegated committee.

## **16. CHARITIES**

- 16.1. Where the council is sole trustee of a charitable body the Clerk/ RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk/RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

## **17. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 17.1. The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk/RFO shall prepare, for approval by the council, 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.

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

## **18. SUSPENSION AND REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

- 18.1. It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.
- 18.2. The council may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that 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.

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**Barton Parish Council**

<b>Minute Number</b>	<b>Action Points</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Update</b>
24/05.2	Promote Sunday bus timetable on noticeboards	Clerk	Completed
24/06	Survey to be issued with flyer	Comms	Completed
24/07.1	Resolve f.o.c. maintenance visit from Mitmark	Clerk	Contacted Mitmark, awaiting response
24/07.1	Cllrs to review Rural Village Services Network newsletter and service - decide on membership continuation	All Cllrs	
24/07.3	Bench quotes to be reviewed	P&OS	
24/07.3	Cllr Brookes proposal to not close for spawning, supporting report to be reviewed with Bailiffs	Fishpond S-C	
24/07.4	Damaged noticeboard to be reinstalled - decision on location and method	BG	Decision confirmed. Clerk to order materials
24/07.6	Allotment committee to meet	Allotments	Completed
24/07.8	Comms to circulate info about who will be at Barton Live	Comms	Completed
24/09.3	Cllr Sharkey to circulate Sam Griffiths' gully report to all Cllrs	ES	
24/09.5	Cllr Sharkey to contact AI Estates Manager re FP17	ES	
24/10.1	Cllr Taylor to attend to failing oak trees at fishpond	JT	Quotes received



## CORRESPONDENCE

### *GENERAL*

1. Resident concerns re Gower House and 10 Main Street, inc request for BPC to approach Historic England to get Gower House listed – *forwarded to Planning, Cllr Gilbey*
2. Resident request for tree safety review around Fishpond following fallen tree – *Clerk responded*
3. Resident report of dog walking through allotments – *forwarded to Allotment committee*
4. Resident report of handle to Toddle springy seat missing – *P&OS attended.*
5. JTHS thanks for donation to Presentation Evening
6. Further response from complainant about tree pruning on Hardy Close adjacent allotments - *acknowledged*
7. Resident call re concerns about noise pollution from Motor X site. *Clerk referred to ESBC Planning Enforcement and Noise Pollution.*
8. Resident report of accident at Oak Road play equipment – *Clerk referred to ESBC*

### *SCC/HIGHWAYS*

9. Request for BPC to advertise school crossing patrol vacancy – *Clerk forwarded to Comms*
10. Data Protection Service details

### *ESBC*

11. Election Notices posted

### *STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE*

12. Crime reported by Clerk – damage to bin in Collinson Park and post in brook. Crime No. 21240056331

### *SPCA/NALC/SLCC*

13. Newsletters forwarded to all Cllrs;