



# Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

## Financial Regulations

### 1 Interpretation

1.1 These are the Financial Regulations of Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council and the following words or phrases expressed in bold type shall have the meanings ascribed to them:

<b>1998 Act</b>	Audit Commission Act 1998;
<b>Access Code</b>	any code, personal identification number (PIN), password, memorable information, etc, needed to access a relevant computer system or Bank Portal;
<b>Agenda</b>	the agenda for a Meeting (generally contained in the Summons);
<b>AAR</b>	the Accounts and Audit Regulations issued under s27, 1998 Act, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified;
<b>Accounts</b>	the accounting records of the Council;
<b>AGAR</b>	the Annual Governance and Accountability Return produced in accordance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, the AAR and Proper Financial Practice;
<b>Annual Budget</b>	a detailed estimate of all receipts and payments, including the use of reserves and all sources of funding, producing the annual budget of the Council;
<b>BACS</b>	Bankers' Automated Clearing System;
<b>Bank</b>	a bank holding an account belonging to the Council;
<b>Bank Account</b>	a Council bank account held by a Bank;
<b>Bank Administrator</b>	an Officer authorised to administer any Bank Account, including creating Electronic Instructions;
<b>Bank Mandate</b>	the mandate issued by the Council to a Bank identifying Bank Signatories;
<b>Banking Portal</b>	a system portal used to access a Bank Account electronically;
<b>Bank Signatory</b>	a Councillor who has been appointed by Council Resolution as a signatory to the Bank Account or Accounts in question (but a Bank Signatory having a family or business connection with the beneficiary of a payment shall not authorise that payment);
<b>Body</b>	the Council, a Committee, a Sub-Committee or a Working Party as the context requires;

<b>Body Chairman</b>	the chairman of a Body as the context requires;
<b>Budget</b>	the budget of a Body as set by the Annual Budget or any Virement;
<b>CHAPS</b>	Clearing House Automated Payment System;
<b>Clerk</b>	the clerk of the Council;
<b>Council</b>	Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council;
<b>Council Chairman</b>	the chairman of the Council;
<b>Councillor</b>	an elected or co-opted member of the Council;
<b>Council Vice-Chairman</b>	the vice-chairman of the Council;
<b>Decision</b>	a decision of a Relevant Body to which these Regulations apply;
<b>Earmarked Reserve</b>	a financial reserve earmarked for a specific project or purpose;
<b>Electronic Instruction</b>	an electronic or internet instruction to a Bank to make a payment or transfer (including by BACS or CHAPS where authorised in accordance with these Regulations);
<b>F&amp;GP</b>	the Council’s Finance and General Purposes Committee;
<b>IFC Confirmation</b>	a document confirming that the Internal Financial Control referred to has been undertaken;
<b>Internal Financial Control</b>	the system for Officers and Supervising Councillors to check that Proper Financial Practice is undertaken, and to facilitate the effective administration of the Council’s functions, including arrangements for the management of risk;
<b>Meeting</b>	a quorate, public, meeting of a Body;
<b>Officer</b>	an employee of the Council;
<b>Part</b>	a numbered section of these Regulations (eg this interpretation section is Part 1);
<b>PCR</b>	The Public Contracts Regulations 2015;
<b>Pricing Submission</b>	a quotation (fixed pricing for the proposed supply) or estimate (estimated pricing for the proposed supply) as applicable in the circumstances of the proposed supply;
<b>Proper Financial Practice</b>	proper practice as set out in the most recent version of “Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners’ Guide”;
<b>Regulations</b>	these Financial Regulations;
<b>Relevant Body</b>	the Body making a Decision in accordance with its terms of reference and these Regulations;
<b>Resolution</b>	a resolution of a Relevant Body;
<b>RFO</b>	the Responsible Financial Officer (a statutory office appointed to by the Council - the Council may appoint an RFO and Deputy RFO,

and any reference to the RFO in these Regulations is to both roles where the context allows for or requires such);

**Supervising Councillor** each Councillor appointed by F&GP to undertake a certain activity or activities as described in these Regulations;

**Summons** the notice summoning a Meeting and specifying the Agenda;

**Virement** a virement of funds between Budgets authorised by the Council.

1.2 Sums referred to in these Regulations exclude Value Added Tax unless stated otherwise.

1.3 References to authorisations, invoices, quotations, estimates, records, reports, schedules, statements, vouchers, or any other document, are references to such in electronic or physical form.

## 2 General

2.1 These Regulations:

2.1.1 govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by Council Resolution; and

2.1.2 must be observed in conjunction with the Council's Standing Orders, Procurement Terms, and any applicable statute or statutory regulation.

2.2 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 Financial Control.

2.3 These Regulations demonstrate how the Council meets these responsibilities and requirements.

2.4 Anything in these Regulations delegated to F&GP may be undertaken by the Council instead.

2.5 The Council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified Decisions, and any Decision regarding the following shall be a matter for the Council only:

2.5.1 setting the Annual Budget or the precept (council tax requirement);

2.5.2 approving the annual governance statement (part 1 of the AGAR);

2.5.3 approving accounting statements (part 2 of the AGAR);

2.5.4 borrowing;

2.5.5 declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and

2.5.6 ensuring that recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors are addressed.

2.6 The Council must also:

2.6.1 determine, and keep under regular review, Bank Mandates;

2.6.2 approve any grant application being sought by the Council from third parties; and

2.6.3 have regard to recommendations from F&GP (made in accordance with its terms of reference) in respect of setting the annual salary for any Officer.

- 2.7 The Council's accounting control systems must include measures:
- 2.7.1 for the timely production of accounts;
- 2.7.2 that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
- 2.7.3 to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
- 2.7.4 identifying the duties of Officers.
- 2.8 At least once a year, prior to approving the AGAR, the Council must review the effectiveness of its Internal Financial Control procedures.
- 2.9 Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an Officer may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.
- 2.10 A failure by a Councillor to abide by these Regulations shall be a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct.
- 2.11 The Clerk has been appointed as RFO and the Assistant to the Clerk as Deputy RFO.
- 2.12 The RFO:
- acts under the policy direction of the Council;
  - administers the Council's financial affairs in accordance with all legislation and Proper Financial Practice;
  - in conjunction with F&GP determines the nature of the Council's accounting records and accounting control systems;
  - ensures that the accounting control systems are observed;
  - maintains that the accounting records of the Council are up to date and in accordance with Proper Financial Practice;
  - assists the Council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
  - produces financial management information as required by F&GP, the Council and these Regulations.
- 2.13 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 the following comply with the AAR:
- 2.13.1 any income and expenditure account and statement of balances;
- 2.13.2 any record of receipts, payments or management information prepared for F&GP or the Council from time to time.
- 2.14 The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:
- 2.14.1 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;
- 2.14.2 a record of the assets and liabilities of the Council; and
- 2.14.3 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.
- 2.15 The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:

- 2.15.1 procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the Council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
- 2.15.2 procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud, and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
- 2.15.3 identification of the duties of Officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those Officers in relation to significant transactions;
- 2.15.4 procedures to ensure that sums written off in accordance with Regulations 14.3 or 14.4 are shown in the accounting records; and
- 2.15.5 measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.

### 3 Accounting and Audit (Internal and External)

- 3.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the AAR, appropriate guidance and Proper Financial Practice.
- 3.2 On a regular basis (at least once in each quarter), and at each financial year end, the Supervising Councillor (or the Supervising Councillors between them where more than one) shall:
  - 3.2.1 undertake Internal Financial Control and authorise the IFC Confirmation;
  - 3.2.2 verify bank reconciliations for all accounts produced by the RFO, and sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification; following which:
  - 3.2.3 the IFC Confirmation and fact of bank reconciliations (including any exceptions) shall be reported to F&GP.
- 3.3 As soon as practicable after the end of the financial year the RFO shall:
  - 3.3.1 finalise the year-end Accounts;
  - 3.3.2 complete the AGAR; and
  - 3.3.3 submit both, and report thereon, to the F&GP, and then to the Council within the timescales set by the AAR.
- 3.4 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 Financial Control.
- 3.5 Officers and Councillors 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.
- 3.6 The internal auditor shall be appointed by F&GP and shall check the Council's governance arrangements as to the effectiveness of the Council's overall controls and decision-making processes, and that Internal Financial Control has been carried out correctly.
- 3.7 The internal auditor shall:
  - be competent and independent of the financial operations of the Council;
  - report to Council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report during each financial year;

- demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, be free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
- not be involved in the financial decision making, management or control of the Council.

3.8 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 Officer, except to the extent that such Officers have been appropriately assigned to assist them.

3.9 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 Financial Practice.

3.10 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 the 1998 Act, or any superseding legislation, and the AAR.

3.11 The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of F&GP any report from internal or external auditors.

#### 4 Annual Budget and Forward Planning

4.1 The process and timetable for preparation of the Annual Budget is determined by the RFO and F&GP, who manage this on behalf of the Council.

4.2 Each Body shall consider its financial requirements in accordance with a timetable set by the RFO and, as desired, submit a draft Budget to the RFO and F&GP for consideration.

4.3 Each year the RFO must prepare a draft Annual Budget for the following financial year to be considered by F&GP and the Council.

4.4 The Council shall then (usually by the end of January):

- 4.4.1 agree the Annual Budget;
- 4.4.2 fix the precept (council tax requirement).

4.5 The RFO shall issue the precept to West Berkshire Council (as billing authority) and shall ensure that each Councillor has access to a copy of the approved Annual Budget.

#### 5 Budgetary Control and Authority to Spend

5.1 In a matter of urgency, to be determined by the Council Chairman (or in their absence the Council Vice-Chairman), and reported to the next Meetings of F&GP and of the full Council for ratification, the Council Chairman (or in their absence the Council Vice-Chairman) may authorise any expenditure reasonably necessary to deal with that matter of urgency.

- 5.2 Save as set out in Regulation 5.1, authorisation (which must be evidenced by the minutes of the Meeting in question or recorded in writing) must be obtained as below for any expenditure:
- 5.2.1 from the Council for any amount;
  - 5.2.2 from a duly delegated Body for amounts up to £25,000.00;
  - 5.2.3 from the Clerk, in conjunction with the Council Chairman (or in their absence the Council Vice-Chairman) or the Chairman of a duly delegated Body, for amounts up to £5,000.00;
  - 5.2.4 from the Clerk for amounts up to £500.00.
- 5.3 Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these Regulations.
- 5.4 During the financial year and with the approval of F&GP there may be Virement.
- 5.5 No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project, and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure, unless F&GP and the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and any requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 5.6 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and that element of these Regulations relating to contracts.
- 5.7 The RFO shall regularly provide F&GP and the Council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each Budget heading, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in that Budget - these statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of variances.
- 5.8 Changes in Earmarked Reserves shall be approved by Council Resolution.

## 6 Contracts

- 6.1 The remainder of this Part does not apply to contracts:
- 6.1.1 entered into in urgency in accordance with Regulation 5.1;
  - 6.1.2 with a value of £1,000.00 or less;
  - 6.1.3 for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage or telephone services;
  - 6.1.4 for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes;
  - 6.1.5 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;
  - 6.1.6 for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;
  - 6.1.7 for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500.00 (in excess of this sum the RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and
  - 6.1.8 for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed price.

- 6.2 Where the Council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by the PCR which is valued at £30,000.00 or more inclusive of VAT, the Council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the PCR (where the Council publishes an open invitation to quote/tender [rather than an invitation to specific entities] the PCR requires councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, and sets out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and publicising the award of new contracts).
- 6.3 Save as set out in Regulation 6.5, for contracts where the PCR does not apply:
- 6.3.1 where the value is anticipated to be between £1,000.01 and £5,000.00 the RFO shall seek to obtain three Pricing Submissions;
- 6.3.2 where the value is anticipated to be between £5,000.01 and £25,000.00 the RFO must obtain three Pricing Submissions;
- 6.3.3 where the value is anticipated to exceed £25,000.00 the RFO must proceed on the basis of a formal tendering process; and:
- 6.3.3.1 the RFO shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases;
- 6.3.3.2 the invitation to tender shall:
- 6.3.3.2.1 refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010;
- 6.3.3.2.2 state the general nature of the intended contract; and
- 6.3.3.2.3 require that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post;
- 6.3.3.3 each tenderer 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;
- 6.3.3.4 all sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one Councillor.
- 6.4 Any invitation to tender issued under this Regulation shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 6.5 The requirements of Regulation 6.3 as to three Pricing Submissions or a tender may only be avoided if approval to proceed is obtained :
- 6.5.1 from the Council Chairman (or in their absence the Council Vice-Chairman) or the Chairman of the Relevant Body for sums up to £25,000.00; or
- 6.5.2 by Council Resolution for any sum; and
- 6.5.3 all such approvals, and the reasoning for them, are to be reported to the next Meeting of F&GP.
- 6.6 A Relevant Body shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender or Pricing Submission.
- 6.7 If a Relevant Body does not accept any tender or Pricing Submission, and the Relevant Body requires further pricing then, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender or Pricing Submission who was present when the original decision making process was being undertaken.



## 7 Orders for Goods and/or Services

- 7.1 Formal orders for goods and/or services shall comply with the Council's Procurement Terms, unless this would be inappropriate in the circumstances in which event an official order should be issued.
- 7.2 All Councillors 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.
- 7.3 Only the RFO may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Council (unless the contract is by deed, in which event the Standing Orders shall apply).
- 7.4 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.

## 8 Banking Arrangements

- 8.1 The Council's banking arrangements, including any Bank Mandate, shall:
  - 8.1.1 be made by the RFO and approved by Council Resolution;
  - 8.1.2 not be delegated to a Committee;
  - 8.1.3 be regularly reviewed.

## 9 System Security

- 9.1 No Officer or Councillor shall disclose any Access Code to any person not authorised in writing by the Council or a duly delegated Body.
- 9.2 Save for any Access Code used by a Bank Signatory to access a Bank Portal using only their personal electronic device or computer, a note shall be made of all Access Codes used by any individual and placed in an identifiable sealed dated envelope, and:
  - 9.2.1 the envelope shall be handed to, and retained securely, by the Council Chairman; and
  - 9.2.2 the envelope may only be opened by the Council Chairman (or the Council Vice-Chairman in their absence) in the presence of two other Councillors; in which case:
    - 9.2.2.1 the relevant Access Code(s) shall be changed as soon as practicable; and
    - 9.2.2.2 the circumstances leading to the envelope needing to be opened shall be reported to F&GP.
- 9.3 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.
- 9.4 Any individual using an electronic device or computer 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.
- 9.5 The Clerk shall be appointed as the Bank Administrator, but may delegate day-to-day banking administration (including use of any Banking Portal) to another Officer.

- 9.6 Any Bank Mandate shall identify the payment limit applicable to the Bank Administrator alone, or by the Bank Administrator with a stated number of Bank Signatory approvals.
- 9.7 Changes to account details for payees may only be made on written notification by the payee verified independently (for example by means of a telephone call to a known payee contact).
- 9.8 Any Council debit card will be restricted to use by the Clerk for single transactions in accordance with their authority to spend (Regulation 5.2.4) unless authorised in writing in accordance with Part 5 or Regulation 10.7.
- 9.9 Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the Council will be specifically restricted to use (in accordance with the spending limits in these Regulation) by the Clerk and will be restricted to a spending limit of £3,000 per month, and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end.
- 9.10 The reimbursement of any personal expenditure is subject to approval in accordance with the Expenses Policy.
- 9.11 The Council will not maintain any form of cash float and any cash received must be banked promptly.

## 10 Payment Authorisation

- 10.1 Each financial year or from time to time as necessary the RFO shall draw up a list of payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (for example salaries, PAYE and NI, pension payments, and regular maintenance contracts), and seek Council authorisation for the same.
- 10.2 Upon such authorisation the RFO may make payments in accordance with the schedule without seeking further authorisation (but subject to the reporting requirements below).
- 10.3 As part of the Agenda for any relevant Meeting, the Clerk shall prepare (as relevant):
  - 10.3.1 a schedule of payments requiring authorisation in accordance with Regulations 5.2.1 or 5.2.2 ("Schedule A i");
  - 10.3.2 a schedule of payments requiring ratification in accordance with Regulations 5.1 or 10.7 ("Schedule A ii");
  - 10.3.3 a schedule of payments authorised in accordance with Regulations 5.2.3 ("Schedule B i") or 5.2.4 ("Schedule B ii") to be noted; and
  - 10.3.4 a schedule of payments made in accordance with Regulation 10.2 ("Schedule C").
- 10.4 The Body in question shall review Schedule A for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by Resolution.
- 10.5 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.
- 10.6 Personnel 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.
- 10.7 In the event that there is no relevant forthcoming Council or Body Meeting, a payment requiring authorisation in accordance with Regulation 5.2.1 or 5.2.2 may be

authorised by the Clerk in conjunction with the Council Chairman (or in their absence the Council Vice-Chairman) or Body Chairman (as the case may be), and reported to the next relevant Council or Body Meeting for ratification.

- 10.8 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work or services to which each invoice relates has/have been received or carried out, examined, and represent/s expenditure previously approved in accordance with these Regulations.
- 10.9 If the work, goods or services has/ve not been carried out and/or received to the specification required:
  - 10.9.1 the RFO shall advise the supplier accordingly and payment will be withheld until the issue/s is/are addressed; and
  - 10.9.2 should the issue/s not be suitably addressed within an acceptable period, or an agreement cannot be reached, F&GP shall consider and agree any further action to be taken.
- 10.10 The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading .

## 11 Making Payments

- 11.1 Following authorisation in accordance with Part 10, payments and transfers between Bank Accounts shall be made by Electronic Instruction or cheque, or otherwise if so Resolved.
- 11.2 Payments to be made by Electronic Instruction:
  - 11.2.1 shall be raised via a Banking Portal against the payee's account by an Officer (and the account details maintained for the payee in the Banking Portal shall be crosschecked with those provided on the authorised invoice etc); and
  - 11.2.2 shall then be authorised within such Banking Portal by two Bank Signatories; and
  - 11.2.3 a record of the payments made and the relevant invoices (etc) shall be retained.
- 11.3 Cheques or orders for payment drawn on a Bank Account shall be signed by two Bank Signatories (and to indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice etc, the Bank Signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil or order for payment).
- 11.4 Where relevant and approved by F&GP Resolution, certain regular payments (utilities, non-domestic rates, etc) may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two Bank Signatories and reported to Council in accordance with these Regulations.

## 12 Officers' Salaries

- 12.1 Salary payments shall be made in accordance with employment contracts, payroll records, relevant legislation (PAYE, National Insurance, etc), and salary rates agreed by Council or a duly delegated Body.
- 12.2 Payment for salaries shall be made by Electronic Instruction in accordance with the procedure set out at Regulation 11.2 provided that:
  - 12.2.1 the details for each payment are listed on the payroll summary each month; and

- 12.2.2 the record of payments (including statutory and discretionary deductions) shall be kept as a separate confidential record, not open to inspection or review (under s.40, Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
- 12.2.2.1 by any Councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
  - 12.2.2.2 by the internal auditor;
  - 12.2.2.3 by the external auditor; or
  - 12.2.2.4 by any person authorised under the 1998 Act, the AAR, or any superseding legislation.

### 13 Loans and Investments

- 13.1 Any Council borrowing may only be undertaken in accordance with a Council Resolution.
- 13.2 Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as hire purchase or the leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by Council Resolution.
- 13.3 Any report in relation to a proposed Council Resolution in accordance with Regulations 13.1 or 13.2 must include an analysis of value for money and reference to the Investment Strategy and Policy where relevant.
- 13.4 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be in the name of the Council and retained in the custody of the RFO.

### 14 Income

- 14.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 14.2 Particulars of all standard charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all sums due to the Council.
- 14.3 The RFO shall have authority to write off individual sums found to be irrecoverable up to a limit, per supplier, of £100.00 per financial year.
- 14.4 F&GP shall determine if other sums found to be irrecoverable are to be written off.

### 15 VAT

- 15.1 The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required.

### 16 Assets, Properties and Estates

- 16.1 No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without:
  - 16.1.1 the authority of a Relevant Body, together with any other consents required by law; preceded by
  - 16.1.2 a report in writing to the Relevant Body, and reported to Council where it is not the Relevant Body, 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).

16.2 The RFO shall:

16.2.1 make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry documentation for property held by the Council;

16.2.2 ensure that a record is maintained of all property 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 AAR;

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

## 17 Charities

17.1 Where the Council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk shall:

17.1.1 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; and

17.1.2 arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

## 18 Risk Management and Insurance

18.1 The RFO shall prepare, for approval by F&GP, risk management arrangements and reporting in respect of all activities of the Council, which shall be reported to the Council at least annually.

18.2 When considering any new relevant activity, the Clerk and RFO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by F&GP.

18.3 Taking into account the annual risk review, the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.

18.4 The RFO shall give prompt notification to F&GP of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

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

18.6 The Clerk or 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 F&GP at the next available Meeting.

18.7 All appropriate Councillors and Officers shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined annually by F&GP.

## 19 Suspension and Revision of Regulations

- 19.1 The RFO shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or Proper Financial Practice and shall advise the Council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Regulations.
- 19.2 The Council may, by Resolution, suspend any Regulation(s) 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 Councillors.