

Public Document Pack

Policy, Governance & Finance

Committee Meeting of Witney Town Council



Monday, 9th June, 2025 at 6.00 pm

To members of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee - R Smith, J Aitman, R Crouch, A Bailey, J Doughty, T Ashby, G Doughty and S Simpson (and all other Town Councillors for information).

You are hereby summonsed to the above meeting to be held in the **Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney** for the transaction of the business stated in the agenda below.

Admission to Meetings

All Council meetings are open to the public and press unless otherwise stated.

Numbers of the public will be limited, with priority given to those who have registered to speak on an item on the agenda. Any member of the public wishing to attend the meeting should contact the Committee Clerk derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk in advance.

Recording of Meetings

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 the council's public meetings may be recorded, which includes filming, audio-recording as well as photography.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings, please let the Deputy Town Clerk or Committee Clerk know before the start of the meeting.

Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence

To consider apologies and reasons for absence.

Committee members who are unable to attend the meeting should notify the Committee Clerk derek.mackenzie@witney-tc.gov.uk **prior to the meeting**, stating the reason for absence.

Standing Order 30(d)(v) permits the appointment of substitute Councillors to a Committee whose role is to replace ordinary Councillors at a meeting of a Committee if ordinary Councillors of the Committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer **before** the meeting that they are unable to attend.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in any of the items under consideration at this meeting in accordance with the Town Council's code of conduct.

3. Election of Vice-Chair

To elect a Vice-Chair of the Committee for the 2025/26 Municipal Year.

4. Minutes (Pages 4 - 13)

- a) To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee meeting held on 31 March & 14 April 2025.
- b) Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere on the agenda (Questions on the progress of any item).

5. **Public Participation**

The meeting will adjourn for this item.

Members of the public may speak for a maximum of **five minutes** each during the period of public participation, in line with Standing Order 42. Matters raised shall relate to the following items on the agenda.

6. **Committee Terms of Reference** (Pages 14 - 17)

To review the Committee Terms of Reference (TOR) if appropriate. The current TOR's are attached.

7. **Committee Objectives & Work Programme for the Municipal Year** (Pages 18 - 20)

To receive and consider the report of the Town Clerk/C.E.O concerning the priorities of this Committee during 2025/26.

Policy

8. **Financial Regulations Adoption** (Pages 21 - 86)

To adopt the revised Financial Regulations. Adjourned from the meeting of the Council 7 May 2025. Minute 257 refers.

9. **Community Engagement Strategy** (Pages 87 - 108)

To review and consider the recommendations of the Stronger Communities Committee made 2 June 2025 to approve the final version of the Community Engagement Strategy.

10. **Volunteer Policy** (Pages 109 - 140)

To receive and consider the proposed Volunteer Policy from the Compliance and Environment Officer.

11. **Memorial Bench Policy** (Pages 141 - 144)

To re-adopt the Memorial Bench Policy.

Governance

12. **Payment of Accounts** (Pages 145 - 169)

To receive and consider the schedule of accounts paid and bank reconciliations from the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Finance

13. **Financial Matters referred from Spending Committees** (Pages 170 - 171)

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

14. **Grants & Subsidised Lettings** (Pages 172 - 188)

To receive and consider the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

15. **Bridge Street Desilting** (Pages 189 - 191)

To receive and consider the report of the Operations Manager in respect of desilting at Bridge Street, Witney.

16. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

To consider and if appropriate, to pass the following resolution:

That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted

17. **Property, Legal & Insurance Matters**

To receive a confidential verbal update from the Town Clerk/C.E.O.

a) **Witney Swifts Licence Agreement** (Pages 192 - 198)

To receive and consider the confidential report of the Head of Estates & Operations.

b) **West Witney Consultation & Project Update** (Pages 199 - 205)

To receive and consider the confidential report of the Project Officer.



Town Clerk

**POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 31 March 2025

At 6.00 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	R Crouch	J Doughty
	O Collins	D Newcombe
	R Smith	
Officers:	Derek Mackenzie	Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
	Adam Clapton	Deputy Town Clerk
	Sharon Groth	Town Clerk
	Nigel Warner	Responsible Financial Officer
Others:	None	

F180 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A Bailey.

F181 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or officers.

F182 MINUTES

The minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 3 February 2025 were received.

Resolved:

That, the minutes of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee meeting held on 3 February 2025 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and be signed by the Chair.

F183 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

F184 NALC MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Committee received the report of the Responsible Financial Officer along with a verbal update.

Following the 2024 review by the National Association of Local Councils which had led to comprehensive amendments, the Council received a draft of the Council's financial regulations which had been updated to reflect its activities. The RFO welcomed comments prior to consideration of the final version at a future meeting of the Committee on 9th June 2025.

Resolved

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the Members provide any comments on the draft financial regulations to the RFO prior to adoption at the meeting on 9th June 2025.

F185 CEMETERY REGULATIONS

The Committee received and considered the revised Cemetery Regulations.

Further to the approval of the Halls, Cemeteries and Allotments Committee on 17 March 2025, Members welcomed the review which would ensure compliance with legislation and offer clear guidance for residents and funeral directors on what was permissible.

The Committee heard that they would be communicated to all user of the cemeteries, funeral directors and memorial masons with immediate effect.

Resolved:

That, the revised cemetery regulations be adopted and applied with immediate effect.

F186 RECORDING OF MEETINGS POLICY REVIEW

The Committee received an updated Protocol for Recording of Public meetings which was overdue for review.

Members heard that although the legislation had not changed, the practice of individuals being able to record a meeting had and therefore the updated protocol was welcomed and unanimously agreed for adoption.

Resolved:

That, the updated Protocol for Recording at Public Meetings be adopted by Witney Town Council.

F187 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Committee received the report of the Responsible Financial Officer with the accompanying payment schedules, bank statements and reconciliations.

In response to a Member's question, the RFO confirmed that the number of cheques now being issued had decreased as Officers phased in the use of electronic transfers and would continue to do so. This provided both a financial saving from reduced postage and also in Officers processing time.

Resolved:

That, the report, bank statements and reconciliations be noted, and the following schedule of payments be approved:

Payment reference/ Cheque Numbers	In the sum of:	Account
DDs, EPs (electronic payment) and Standing Orders December 2024	£43,716.91	General CB 1
Cheques 35043-35096; DDs, BACs and Standing Orders December 2024	£164,303.00	Imprest CB 2
Cheques 101272-101276, DDs, EPs and Standing Orders January 2025	£199,871.50	General CB 1
Cheques 35096-35115, various cancelled cheques, DDs and Standing Orders January 2025	£21,462.62	Imprest CB 2

F188 INTERNAL AUDIT

The Committee received and considered the interim update report of the Internal Auditor, Auditing Solutions for 2024/25 along with the January 2025 stocktake for liquor conducted by the Council's independent stock checker.

Members welcomed the report which provided reassurance as it highlighted no areas of concern.

It was also acknowledged by Members that the January 2025 stocktake showed improvements to the running costs for the Corn Exchange.

The Committee then considered the appointment of Auditing Solutions for an additional year. The RFO reiterated the recommendation in his report that a full review of providers would be carried out in March 2026 ahead of the 2026/27 audit appointment.

Resolved:

1. That, the Interim Audit Report 2024/25 from the Council's internal auditors be noted and,
2. That, the external stocktake report for January 2025 be noted and,
3. That, the appointment of Internal Auditor report be noted and,
4. That, Auditing Solutions are appointed as the Councils Internal Auditor for 2025-26 and,
5. That the appointment of Internal Auditor for 2026-27 be reviewed in March 2026 and,
6. That the Council review its internal audit service provision in 2026 ahead of the procurement of the internal audit service for 2027-28.

F189 EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL CONTROL: CORPORATE & FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer and provided a verbal update to explain the need for a robust corporate risk assessment to be in place.

The RFO answered questions from a Member concerning the assessment of the risks included in the documents as well as the structuring of action plans to deal with issues that arose. He advised that the responsibility sat with the RFO who in conjunction with Line Managers, worked to ensure that identified issues were actioned swiftly.

An error was noted in the Banking and Investments sheet, point 3 should show as a rating of 2 rather than 4.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted and,
- 2.

That, the Risk Management Policy & Corporate Risk Assessment for the financial year 2024-25 be endorsed and signed by the Chair

F190 FINANCE REPORT

The Committee received and considered the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) detailing income and expenditure for budgets which were the responsibility of the committee.

Members heard that although the accounts presented were to the 31 January, that with it being the last day of the financial year, the RFO did not expect any major changes to the revised 2024/25 budget projections.

The RFO provided a verbal update on the Council's insurance premium which had been renewed in the last year of a fixed agreement. In particular, officers had undertaken a review of motor insurance policy prices to ensure due diligence with regard to best value.

A Member raised a question as to the columns used in the reports that were provided, the RFO explained that after the budget setting period in December of each year the report columns did change however, he would review and consider how they are provided in the future.

The Committee were pleased to see good returns of interest, however it was explained that this was partly due to the capital sums for projects had been held longer than projected.

Members considered the continued membership of the Co-Operative Councils Innovation Network (CCIN); it was felt that it was a small membership fee for the potential opportunity of use for future grant funding. It was unanimously agreed that membership should continue for 2025/26.

The report also provided an update on the Witney Music Festival and their governance which had been discussed at previous meetings,

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, the management accounts of the Committee's services to 31 January 2025 be approved and,
3. That, the investments report to the period of 28 February 2025 be approved and,
4. That, the Council continue it's membership of CCIN for a further year.

F191 FINANCIAL MATTERS REFERRED FROM SPENDING COMMITTEES

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk. Members noted the financial implications from decisions taken by the Council's standing Committees during the last meetings cycle.

Resolved:

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, recommendations of the spending Committees as detailed be approved.

F192 GRANTS & SUBSIDISED LETTINGS

The Committee received the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) concerning grant activity to local organisations.

Members received a verbal update from the Deputy Town Clerk following the meeting held with Witney Dramatic Society (WDS) regarding their request for grant funding for replacement lighting. Both the District Councils West Hive scheme and Witney Town Charity were suggested as additional sources of funding that WDS may wish to explore. The Committee unanimously agreed a grant of £1,500 to kickstart their fundraising with a potential additional £500 if required to help them meet their goal. WDS should also be invited to apply for a subsidised let of the Corn Exchange for their 80th anniversary performance.

The Committee then discussed the ongoing issue of toilet provision at West Witney Sports & Social Club (WWSCC) for Witney Park Run, who were the only sport club user who have expressed an issue with the lack of provision. Members were all in an agreement with the award of a grant to fund the opening of the club for six months to support the free community event each week.

Subsidised lettings of The Leys Recreation ground were discussed and agreed by all Members for Witney Carnival, Witney Pride, Witney Music Festival; it was additionally agreed that as the

budget line would be exhausted that £320 be vired from the discretionary grant budget underspend for 2024/25.

It was unanimously agreed by Members to support the recommendation of the Stronger Communities Committee that of the £1,300 underspend in the £50 for fifty grant scheme £1,000 be vired to support the WeGame sessions provided by APCAM and for the remaining £300 to be vired to support the expanding programme of VE Day 80th Anniversary Celebrations.

Members discussed the use of the remaining discretionary grants budget and again supported the recommendation of the Stronger Communities Committee to provide £2,600 to APCAM to provide mental health drop-in session in the Corn Exchange from the discretionary grants underspend for 2024/25.

The Committee reviewed the request from Witney Town Band for a grant to support its annual activities and a potential subsidised let later in the year; it was agreed that the band was an asset to the town and that their requests should be supported.

The request from Witney Youth Council to host a cultural event in the Corn Exchange was also supported and the Committee was unanimous in support of the subsidised use of the hall so this can take place.

Lastly, the Town Clerk/CEO provided a verbal update confirming the award to the Council of £5,000 from Cllr Enright's (OCC) Councillor priority funding to be used towards interpretation panels in the towns playgrounds and also to provide a bleed kit.

Resolved:

1. That, the report and verbal updates be noted and,
2. That, Witney Dramatic Society be invited to apply for a subsidised let of the Corn Exchange for their anniversary performance and,
3. That, a grant of £1,500 be awarded to Witney Dramatic Society with an additional £500 held in reserve and,
4. That, a grant of £1,040 be made available for the use of toilets at West Witney by Witney Parkrun and,
5. That, subsidised lettings of The Leys for Witney Pride (£730), Witney Carnival (£1,810) and Witney Music Festival (£3,280) be agreed and,
6. That, the additional £320 to fund the Leys recreation ground subsidised letting requests be vired from the discretionary grants budget (4100/407) and,
7. That, subsidised lettings of the Corn Exchange for Witney Town Band (£205) and Witney Youth Council (£205) be agreed and,
8. That, the annual grant of £660 be agreed for Witney Town Band and,
9. That, £1,000 of the underspend from the £50 for fifty grant scheme be utilised to provide the APCAM WeGame sessions in the 2025/26 financial year and,
10. That, £2,600 be provided from the discretionary grants budget to APCAM for the provision of drop-in sessions in the 2025/26 financial year and,
11. That, the remaining £300 from the £50 for fifty grant scheme be allocated to the VE Day 80th Anniversary celebrations and,
12. That, the above grants be provided under the General Power of Competence and recipients be asked to acknowledge the Town Council in any promotional material.

F193 WEST WITNEY PROJECT FUNDING

The Committee received the report of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) along with a verbal explanation in relation to the financial funding and project timetable of the West Witney Sports & Social Club redevelopment and new Works Depot.

Members heard the reasoning for the loan was to facilitate the works and how it would be structured to ensure that the burden is borne by future users of the facilities as well as current users as this was the prudent and proper way for the Council to act.

The Committee welcomed the period of consultation which was timetabled to take place in May and for its design and delivery to be delegated to the Town Clerk/CEO. They also welcomed that the outline consideration of the loan application be discussed at the 9th June meeting of the Committee ahead of its submission. Members were unanimous in agreement of both these decisions and asked officers to consider communications as early as possible.

In response to a Members question regarding rising costs and if the cost should exceed the projections made. The RFO confirmed that although Value Engineering could be utilised it would be possible for the Council to discuss an increase to the loan amount, though this would hopefully not be necessary as Officers would strive to work to remain within the budget.

The RFO further confirmed that despite rising interest rates the projected interest payments that were budgeted for in the setting of the 2025/26 budget were still within the expected range.

Resolved:

1. That, the report and verbal update be noted and,
2. That, the West Witney project timetable be approved and,
3. That, the design and delivery of the consultation be delegated to the Town Clerk/CEO.

F194 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:

That in accordance with section (1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

F195 PROPERTY, LEGAL & INSURANCE MATTERS

The Committee received the confidential report of the Town Clerk/CEO which included updates on St Marys' Church Carillion, lease agreement with Bob Wilson Funfairs and progress of the Windrush Place Pavillion.

Members received and considered the report of the Diocese clock advisor and in respect of the St Marys' Church Carillion Members were in in favour of preserving the heritage of the church and its clock assets. The Town Clerk/CEO advised that funds had been set allocated in the

2025/26 budget to be used for any necessary repairs that were identified in the report of the clock custodians.

The Committee received and considered the recommendation of the Stronger Communities Committee in respect of a lease Agreement with Bob Wilson Funfairs. Members were unanimous in support of the current proposal.

Members heard from the Town Clerk/CEO on the progression of the Pavillion and it was agreed by Members that a Pavillion Task & Finish group be established so that this could be focused on bringing about the best resolution for the Council and community. It was agreed unanimously that the group be made up of Cllrs Crouch, Smith and Newcombe and that the Town Clerk/CEO circulate details collated so far to the group.

Lastly, the Deputy Town Clerk advised the Committee of a potential copyright issue which was being explored further by Officers, it was agreed that Officers speak with the National Association of Local Councils to gain their views.

Resolved:

1. That, the report and verbal update noted and,
2. That, a "Pavilion Task & Finish Group" be established and the membership be made up of Cllrs, Crouch, Smith & Newcombe and,
3. That, the recommendation of the Stronger Communities Committee concerning the commercial agreement with Bob Wilson Funfairs be approved and,
4. That, repairs to the St. Mary's Church clock & carillon be carried out in accordance with the Oxford Diocesan report and,
5. That, Officers contact NALC in relation to the copyright issue.

F196 STAFFING MATTERS

The Committee received the minutes of the Personnel Sub Committee meeting held on 13 February and 20 March 2025.

Resolved:

That, the confidential minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 13 February and 20 March 2025, and the recommendations contained therein be approved.

The meeting closed at: 7.44 pm

Chair

**POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL**

Held on Monday, 14 April 2025

At 6.48 pm in the Gallery Room, The Corn Exchange, Witney

Present:

Councillor J Aitman (Chair)

Councillors:	O Collins R Smith A Bailey	J Doughty D Newcombe
Officers:	Sharon Groth Adam Clapton Derek Mackenzie	Town Clerk Deputy Town Clerk Senior Administrative Officer & Committee Clerk
Others:	Councillor Geoff Doughty	

F197 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R Crouch.

F198 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest from Members or Officers.

F199 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:

That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

F200 IT/COMPUTER SERVICE PROCUREMENT

The Committee received and considered the report of the Deputy Town Clerk concerning computer provision at the Town Council.

Members welcomed the report and asked questions regarding the existing provision and the possibility of upgrading to a cloud-based server. The town council had undergone rapid growth in recent years and technology had grown within this time; this had led to a necessary piecemeal approach, but now was the time to assess the Council's requirements.

The Committee were advised budgets were in place for these changes, and plans were underway to undertake a seamless transfer.

Resolved:

1. That, the report be noted and,
2. That, a change in IT provision and migration to a cloud-based server be approved and,
3. That, the decision on procurement be delegated to the Deputy Town Clerk in consultation with the Town Clerk/C.E.O and in line with financial regulations.

F201 STAFFING MATTERS

The Committee received a verbal update and recommendations from the Personnel Sub Committee meeting held earlier in the evening.

Resolved:

That, the recommendations of the Personnel Sub-Committee meeting held on 14 April 2025 be approved.

The meeting closed at: 6.58 pm

Chair

POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Terms of Reference

Meeting Date: Monday, 9 June 2025

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

The purpose of this report is for Members to review and recommend terms of reference for the Committee for the forthcoming municipal year.

Background

At the Annual Council Meeting held on 7th May 2025, it was resolved that terms of reference for each Committee would be reviewed at each meeting in the current meeting cycle.

Current Situation

The current terms of Reference for the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee are:

The overall purpose of this committee is to ensure that the council's finances, staffing, and its statutory obligations are conducted in accordance with good practice.

- a) To advise on, and consider, matters of Council administration and policy;
- b) To conduct effectively the Council's budgetary, financial and precepting responsibilities in accordance with statutory requirements, and to keep the smooth functioning of the Council's work under review;
- c) To consider and keep under review:
 - 1. the main objectives of the Council.
 - 2. all major issues of policy affecting the town council's area.
 - 3. the development of existing, and introduction of new, services.
 - 4. the order of priorities between services or projects, and to advise other committees accordingly.
 - 5. relationships with West Oxfordshire District and Oxfordshire County Councils, other public bodies and outside organisations;
- d) To consider the resources available to meet the Council's objectives in terms of land, property, finance, and manpower and to advise other committees and the Council as required.
- e) To consider the financial implications of the Council's plans and to recommend to the Council levels of expenditure in connection therewith;
- f) To regulate and control the finances of the Council.
- g) To consider estimates of this committee and of other committees of income and expenditure on continuing services and payments on capital account for the next and future financial years.

- h) To review all charges and fees made or proposed by all committees.
- i) To submit to the Council estimates of income and expenditure of the Council on continuing services and of payments on capital account for the next financial year and make a recommendation as to the Council's Precept.
- j) To consider and approve as appropriate matters referred from other committees to incur expenditure greater than already approved by the Council, within the requirements of Standing Orders; and also to consider any such requirement in respect of its own expenditure.
- k) To have charge of the financial and accounting arrangements of the Council.
- l) To receive reports from the internal and external auditors.
- m) To approve the Financial Statements and Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR).
- n) To consider and decide upon recommendations from service committees for variations in staffing – via the Personnel Sub-Committee.
- o) To hold overall responsibility for employment matters - via the Personnel Sub-Committee.
- p) To review Standing Orders, terms of reference of committees, terms of delegation to officers and Financial Regulations and recommend amendments to the Council.
- q) To review from time-to-time existing Council Policies as well as agree and implement new Policies accordingly when the need arises – or to enact new government legislation and recommend to the Council.
- r) To be responsible to the Council for and review the effectiveness and efficiency of all services.
- s) To consider all matters arising in relation to the boundaries of the town, the number of Town Councillors and elections of any kind within the town and make recommendations to the Council.
- t) To consider any matters affecting members, including members' allowances (if appropriate) and the Council's Calendar of Meetings.
- u) To be responsible for the Council's assets, records, and archives.
- v) To be responsible for council's investment properties and other premises owned or leased to the council (save for council properties reserved to other committees according to their responsibilities)
- w) To consider applications for grants and to approve any such grants.
- x) The Membership of the Committee shall consist of 6 Members plus the Leader and Town Mayor ex officio;
- y) The quorum of the Committee shall be 4 Members.

(It should be noted that the Personnel Sub-Committees responsible to this Committee will have its own terms of reference.)

The Committee is invited to consider whether it wishes to propose any amendments to the Terms of Reference for the forthcoming municipal year. While the following suggestions are

provided for consideration, ***the Town Clerk recommends an opportunity to review and rationalise the existing terms. Given the comprehensive nature of the current list and the overlap between some responsibilities, there is scope to consolidate and present them under clearer headings of responsibility. A revised draft will be tabled at the meeting for discussion.***

- (a) To advise on, and consider, matters of Council administration, policy and governance;
- (c)(3) the development of existing, and introduction of new, services, *including grounds maintenance*;
- (c)(6) the main *strategic* objectives of the Council;
- (f) To regulate and control the finances of the Council *and to have charge of its financial and accounting arrangements*;
- (s) To consider all matters arising in relation to the boundaries of the town, the number of Town Councillors, elections *and the impacts of future Local Government devolution* and make recommendations to the Council;
- (v) To be responsible for council's investment facilities and other premises owned or leased to the council (save for council properties reserved to other committees according to their responsibilities) *and oversight of major projects therein*.
- (w) To consider applications for grants and to approve any such grants *in line with agreed grant policies and to recommend approval for any other funding to Full Council*.

And,

Suggest removal of,

- (p) To review Standing Orders, terms of reference of committees, terms of delegation to officers and Financial Regulations and recommend amendments to the Council. And take these to Full Council as a matter of course annually or when required.

And,

Suggest inclusion of,

- To oversee the Council's risk register, insurance, data protection, freedom of information and legal matters in line with legislation and best practice;
- Within all its decision making ensure that the green environment and biodiversity of public open spaces is protected and enhanced in line with the Council's Climate Emergency aspirations.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – no direct implications.
- b) Biodiversity – see text above.
- c) Crime & Disorder – no direct implications.

d) Environment & Climate Emergency – see text above.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Financial Implications

The financial implications under each term will be considered within Committee reports at the time of presentation.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and,

1. Review the terms of reference; and
2. Consider any changes to the terms of reference; and
3. Recommend such changes be made to Full Council on 23rd June 2025.

POLICY GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Committee Objectives & Work Programme for the Municipal Year

Meeting Date: Monday 9 June 2025

Contact Officer: Town Clerk - Sharon Groth

The purpose of this report is to update Members on this Committee's objectives and priorities for the current municipal year, focusing on funding, governance, legal aspects of projects, and the review and adoption of policies and strategies. This will enable the Town Cler to ensure there is a manageable programme of works, and to deploy the necessary resources appropriately.

Background

The Policy, Governance & Finance Committee serves as the strategic oversight body for the Council's financial management, governance framework, and major policy decisions. Following the comprehensive work programme established in previous years, this report provides an updated status of ongoing projects and identifies new priorities for 2025/26.

The Committee's work programme continues to reflect the substantial portfolio of projects and responsibilities that have evolved since the previous municipal year, with particular focus on completing outstanding S106 projects, strengthening governance frameworks, and ensuring effective financial stewardship.

Current Situation

The Council maintains a significant and complex work programme across multiple project categories. Members are referred to previous reports from this cycle of meetings of the spending Committees detailing those objectives and projects [the Town Clerk will endeavour to pull a concise report together to be tabled at the meeting]; however the reports cover:

- **Completed Projects:** Major achievements from 2024/25
- **Projects In Progress:** Current active projects requiring ongoing oversight
- **Preparation Pool/Unfunded Projects:** Future priorities awaiting funding or capacity
- **S106 Projects:** Developer-funded projects requiring Council project management

Key Developments Since Last Report

The Council has successfully delivered several major projects while maintaining progress on complex multi-year initiatives. However, the scale and complexity of the work programme continues to place significant demands on officer capacity, particularly with WODC's

expectation that the Town Council will project manage S106 developments without or with limited district council support.

The emerging Strategic Plan, will provide clearer direction for prioritising resources and aligning committee work programmes with the Council's long-term objectives which the Town Clerk hopes to be in a position to present to Council before the summer recess.

Capacity and Resource Considerations

Members should note that the current work programme represents a substantial commitment of both financial and human resources. The timing of major projects has been carefully scheduled to balance officer capacity with delivery expectations, with some larger projects necessarily planned for 2026/27 to ensure quality delivery.

The Committee's oversight role remains critical in ensuring projects are delivered efficiently while maintaining the Council's governance standards and financial controls.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

a) Equality - The work programme includes projects that enhance accessibility and community facilities, ensuring equitable access to Council services and amenities across all demographics.

b) Biodiversity - Major projects incorporate biodiversity enhancement measures, particularly in open space developments and facility improvements, supporting the Council's environmental commitments.

c) Crime & Disorder - Infrastructure projects include appropriate lighting, sight lines, and design features that contribute to community safety and crime prevention.

d) Environment & Climate Emergency - All projects are assessed against the Council's Climate Emergency declaration, with sustainable design, energy efficiency, and environmental impact minimisation prioritised in project planning and delivery.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Key Risk Factors:

- **Capacity Risk:** The substantial work programme requires careful resource management to avoid over-commitment and ensure quality delivery

- **Financial Risk:** Multiple major projects require robust financial planning and monitoring to maintain fiscal responsibility
- **Delivery Risk:** External dependencies, particularly with S106 projects and partner organisations, require contingency planning
- **Governance Risk:** The complexity of projects demands strong oversight to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements

Risk Mitigation: The Committee's regular review of the work programme ensures early identification of capacity constraints and enables proactive resource reallocation. The Strategic Plan provides a framework for prioritising projects when resources are constrained.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. The Committee's work programme delivers significant social value through:

- Enhanced community facilities and recreational opportunities
- Improved accessibility and inclusion across Council services
- Economic benefits through local procurement and employment
- Environmental improvements contributing to community wellbeing
- Strengthened governance and transparency in local decision-making

Financial implications

Key considerations for financial implications of the work programme include:

- **Revenue Impact:** Ongoing operational costs of new facilities and services
- **Capital Programme:** Phased delivery of major projects within approved budgets
- **External Funding:** Maximising grant opportunities and S106 contributions
- **Reserves Management:** Strategic use of earmarked reserves to support project delivery
- **Long-term Sustainability:** Ensuring projects contribute to the Council's long-term financial resilience

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider any further projects or Committee objectives it wishes to add to its work programme for 2025/26.

POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Financial Regulations

Date: Monday 9 June 2025.

Contact Officer: Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

Background

The council has adopted Financial Regulations to regulate and control financial affairs and accounting procedures to assist compliance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and to reflect the guidance and good practice detailed in the “[Practitioners’ Guide](#) – governance and accountability for smaller authorities in England” (March 2025).

Current Situation

The Council regularly reviews its Financial Regulations, the last review being in April 2023. The existing Financial Regulations may be viewed via [this link](#).

The Council’s Financial Regulations are based on the latest model orders produced by the National Association of Local Councils. The 2019 model orders, which were a reference point at the last review, were subject to a major revision/ re-write in 2023.

The RFO has reviewed the 2024 model Financial Regulations (FRs) alongside the current Town Council Financial Regulations.

There are approximately 10,000 town and parish councils in England and Wales, ranging in expenditure of £100 to £5 million and so clearly the FRs need to be adapted to each Council due to the great variation in size and function. Therefore the 2024 model is enclosed for Members with initial proposed changes by the RFO tracked. Many of these changes are to reflect the additional Witney-specific detail in the current FR’s. The opportunity has also been taken to make changes in some lines to reflect the working practices of a larger Council.

The new model Financial Regulations represent a major change compared with the existing ones and so they were presented in first draft to the meeting of this Committee which took place on 31 March 2025. Further work has taken place, and the Financial Regulations are now brought forward to Members for their detailed consideration.

Members should refer to the three appended documents:

1. Appendix 1: The NALC Model Financial Regulations 2024.
2. Appendix 2: Proposed Witney Town Council Financial Regulations, tracked to show changes against the model regulations.
3. Appendix 3: Proposed Witney Town Council Financial Regulations, with changes from Appendix applied (without the tracking showing), for ease of reading.

Guidance from the National Association of Local Councils

In considering the Financial Regulations NALC has published the following guidance notes. The guidance notes explain some main points and also draw attention to some of the parts of the FRs which require specific consideration by councils. For ease of reference they have been pasted into this report in italics so that there is no ambiguity regarding the source.

This Model Financial Regulations template was produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in April 2024 for the purpose of its member councils and county associations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this document are correct at time of publication. NALC cannot accept responsibility for errors, omissions and changes to information subsequent to publication.

Notes to assist in the use of this template:

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- 2) *Bold text indicates legal requirements, which a council cannot change or suspend.*
- 3) *For the rest, each council needs to adapt the model to suit its size and structure. For example, some councils have both a clerk and RFO, possibly with several more staff, while others have a single employee as clerk/RFO. Some councils have committees, some have a high level of delegation and some make all decisions at full council meetings. Many now use online payment methods, but others still rely on cheques.*
- 4) *Curly brackets indicate words, sentences or sections that can be removed if not applicable, or amended to fit the council's circumstances. An example of this is the phrase {or duly delegated committee}, which can be deleted if there are no committees.*
- 5) *Specific areas that may need adapting:*
 - a) *In 1.5 – is the Clerk the RFO?*
 - b) *In 3.3 and 3.4, the words "Governance and Accountability" do not apply in Wales*
 - c) *In section 4, does the council have committees and how many years are forecast?*
 - d) *In 5.6, does the council issue an open invitation to tender, or invite specific firms?*
 - e) *In 5.9, are online prices acceptable evidence?*
 - f) *In 5.13, 5.15 and 5.17, does the council have committees?*
 - g) *In 5.16, will a councillor ever be instructed to place an order?*

- h) *In 5.20, is there a minimum level for official orders?*
- i) *Section 6 includes several alternatives to cover delegation to committees or to officers, approval of invoices individually or in batches, or for approval of regular contractual payments at the beginning of the year.*
- j) *Sections 7, 8 and 9 also includes several alternatives, including wording for where the clerk is a signatory. These are intended to allow a council's financial regulations to fit what they actually do, not to force any council to change what they do.*
- k) *Section 10 gives two alternatives, with or without petty cash.*
- l) *13.6 has alternatives for VAT-registered and unregistered councils – only use one.*
- m) *13.7 and 13.8 are removable if they don't apply to the council.*
- n) *Much of Section 16 can be deleted if not applicable.*
- o) *17.3, is the Clerk the RFO or will the RFO consult the Clerk?*
- 6) *Square brackets indicate where the council needs to specify who, or how much, or what the timescale is. For example [£500] might need to be £100, or [October] might need to be November, or [the council] might need to say the Policy and Resources Committee.*
 - a) *In 4.1 and 4.7, select the wording for England or Wales, based on your location.*
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- 7) *It is challenging to try to offer guidance on setting financial limits. A council spending £1,000 a year is unlikely to delegate authority to spend £500 to its proper officer, but one spending £5 million a year might regard £5,000 as a reasonable limit. Each council needs to determine its own limits, that help, rather than hinder, its operations.*
- 8) *Key limits to set:*
 - a) *In 5.6, at what limit will the council require a formal tender process to ensure fair competition, rather than just asking for quotes? If this is set too low, it may discourage suppliers. Many small councils might only use formal tenders once every few years.*
 - b) *In 5.8, at what limit will the council require fixed-price quotes rather than estimates?*
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 - g) *In Section 9, what are the limits for card payments?*
 - h) *In 16.5, what value of assets can be bought or disposed of, without seeking council approval?*

- 9) *The contents list is a table that extracts section headings from the document. It can be updated by clicking on the contents list, whereupon a tab saying “update table” appears at the top of the list.*
- 10) *Once this model has been tailored to fit the council’s needs, the resulting Financial Regulations (with the insertion of the council’s name at the top) should be adopted at a meeting of the full council. The date of adoption should be inserted below the Contents. Any subsequent proposal for amendment should also be made to the full council.*
- 11) *The council should keep abreast of developments in legislation that affect the local council sector and should review and update its Financial Regulations annually.*
- 12) *Please ensure that the latest approved version is published on the council’s website.*

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council’s Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – no implications directly resulting from this report.
- b) Biodiversity - no implications directly resulting from this report.
- c) Crime & Disorder - no implications directly resulting from this report.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency - no implications directly resulting from this report.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Financial Regulations to regulate and control financial affairs and accounting procedures should assist compliance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and to reflect the guidance and good practice detailed in the “[Practitioners’ Guide](#) – governance and accountability for smaller authorities in England” (March 2025). Therefore, their adoption is essential to help control risk.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates. Robust financial management and control is a prerequisite of delivering social value. Financial Regulations assist in this regard.

Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. However Financial Regulation which assist financial management and control are vital in the Council’s drive for value for money.

Environmental Impact

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

Officers are continually assessing the environmental impact of services and assets to ensure where possible measures are taken to support the Council's climate declaration of carbon neutrality by 2028.

There are no direct environmental impacts arising from proposed changes to the regulations.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Collectively Members are custodians of the public purse with most of the funding coming from the taxpayers of Witney. Robust Financial Regulations, in line with legislation, guidance and best practice is an essential part of the Council's internal control system.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Recommendations

Members are invited:

1. To note the report.
2. To recommend to the Town Council that the Financial Regulations (as amended), are adopted at its meeting on 23 June 2025.
3. That the Financial Regulations be further reviewed by 30 June 2026.

MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

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[ENTER COUNCIL NAME] FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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

1. General

- 1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.
- 1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.4. In these Financial Regulations:
 - 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
 - "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
 - "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
 - 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*
 - *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
 - 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
 - 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.
- 1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. [The Clerk has been appointed as RFO and these regulations apply accordingly.] The RFO;
 - acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
 - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;
 - seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
 - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.6. **The council must not delegate any decision regarding:**

- **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);**
- **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls**
- **approving accounting statements;**
- **approving an annual governance statement;**
- **borrowing;**
- **declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and**
- **addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors**

1.7. In addition, the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of [£5,000]; and

2. Risk management and internal control

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

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

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

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

2.5. **The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**

- **ensure that risk is appropriately managed;**
- **ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;**
- **prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and**
- **allow the reconstitution of any lost records;**
- **identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and**
- **ensure division of responsibilities.**

2.6. At least [once in each quarter], and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair {or a cheque signatory} shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council {Finance Committee}.

- 2.7. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. Accounts and audit

- 3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonably accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**
- **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;**
 - **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual {Governance and Accountability} Return.
- 3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual {Governance and Accountability} Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.
- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by [the council] and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.
- 3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
- is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and

- has no involvement in the management or control of the council

3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions;
- provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
- direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.

3.11. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

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

4. Budget and precept

4.1. **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its [council tax (England)/budget (Wales)] requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**

4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by [the council] at least annually in [October] for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the [Chair of the Council or relevant committee]. {The RFO will inform committees of any salary implications before they consider their draft their budgets.}

4.3. No later than [month] each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all [receipts and payments/income and expenditure] for the following financial year {along with a forecast for the following [three financial years]}, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.

4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. {Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward (by placing them in an earmarked reserve) with the formal approval of the full council.}

4.5. Each committee (if any) shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the council {finance committee} not later than the end of [November] each year.

- 4.6. The draft budget {with any committee proposals and [three-year]} forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the {finance committee and a recommendation made to the} council.
- 4.7. Having considered the proposed budget and [three-year] forecast, the council shall determine its [council tax (England)/budget (Wales)] requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than [the end of January] for the ensuing financial year.
- 4.8. **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.9. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.
- 4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.11. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council {or relevant committee}.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 6.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed [£60,000] including VAT, the Clerk shall {seek formal tenders from at least [three] suppliers agreed by [the council]} OR {advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation}. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.

- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation¹ regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.**
- 5.8. For contracts greater than [£3,000] excluding VAT the Clerk [or RFO] shall seek at least [3] fixed-price quotes;
- 5.9. where the value is between [£500] and [£3,000] excluding VAT, the Clerk [or RFO] shall try to obtain 3 estimates {which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.}
- 5.10. For smaller purchases, [the clerk] shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 5.11. **Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:
- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
 - iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
 - iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.
- 5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council {or relevant committee}. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 5.14. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:
- [the Clerk], under delegated authority, for any items below [£500] excluding VAT.
 - the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council {or Chair of the appropriate committee}, for any items below [£2,000] excluding VAT.
 - {a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under [£5,000] excluding VAT}
 - {in respect of grants, a duly authorised committee within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council.}
 - the council for all items over [£5,000];

¹ The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website if they advertise contract opportunities and also to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they were advertised.

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

- 5.16. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order {unless instructed to do so in advance by a resolution of the council} or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 5.17. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council {or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference} except in an emergency.
- 5.18. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to [£2,000] excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to [the council] as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 5.19. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless [the council] is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.
- 5.20. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services {above [£250] excluding VAT} unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.
- 5.21. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by [the RFO].

6. Banking and payments

- 6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with [name bank]. The arrangements shall be reviewed [annually] for security and efficiency.
- 6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.
- 6.3. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by [the RFO]. {Where the certification of invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a statement by the RFO that all invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO}.

- 6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.
- 6.5. All payments shall be made by [online banking/cheque], in accordance with a resolution of the council {or duly delegated committee}{or a delegated decision by an officer}, unless [the council] resolves to use a different payment method.
- 6.6. {For each financial year [the RFO] may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the council {or a duly delegated committee} may authorise in advance for the year}.
- 6.7. {A copy of this schedule of regular payments shall be signed by [two members] on each and every occasion when payment is made - to reduce the risk of duplicate payments.}
- 6.8. {A list of such payments shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the council or Finance Committee} for information only.
- 6.9. The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments {only} in the following circumstances:
- i. {any payments of up to [£500] excluding VAT, within an agreed budget}.
 - ii. payments of up to [£2,000] excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
 - iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 {or to comply with contractual terms}, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of [the council], where the [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}.
 - iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of [£10,000], provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee].
- 6.10. The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the council {or finance committee}. The council {or committee} shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last item by the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, [the RFO] shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify [a number of] councillors who will be authorised to approve

transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process. {The Clerk may be an authorised signatory, but no signatory should be involved in approving any payment to themselves.}

- 7.2. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.
- 7.3. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 7.4. The Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be sent [by email] to [two] authorised signatories.
- 7.5. In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator [an authorised signatory] shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.
- 7.6. Two [councillors who are] authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.
- 7.7. Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online {and a printout of the transaction confirming that the payment has been made shall be appended to the invoice for audit purposes}.
- 7.8. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next [council] meeting {and appended to the minutes}.
- 7.9. With the approval of [the council] in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are [signed/approved online] by [two authorised members]. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by [the council] at least every two years.
- 7.10. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of [the council] provided that each payment is approved online by [two authorised bank signatories], evidence is retained and any payments are reported to [the council] at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 7.11. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed {or approved online} by [two members], evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by [the council] at least every two years.
- 7.12. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by [two of] the Clerk and [the RFO] [a member]. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every [two years].

7.13. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.

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

8. Cheque payments

8.1. Cheques or orders for payment in accordance in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by [two members]{and countersigned by the Clerk}.

8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.

8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.

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

9. Payment cards

9.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to [the Clerk and the RFO] and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of [£500] unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.

9.2. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by [the council]. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to [the council] and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of [the council].

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

9.4. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used {under any circumstances.} OR {except for expenses of up to [£250] including VAT, incurred in accordance with council policy.}

10. Petty Cash

10.1. {The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by the Clerk [or RFO] (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.} **OR** {The RFO shall maintain a petty cash [float/imprest account] of [£250] and may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.

- a) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept, along with receipts to substantiate every payment.
- b) Cash 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 any schedule of payments presented for approval.}

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

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

12. Loans and investments

- 12.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.
- 12.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the [Secretary of State/Welsh Assembly Government] (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the full council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.
- 12.3. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must

written be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

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

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

12.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

13. Income

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

13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Clerk. [The RFO] shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.

13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by [the RFO] and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.

13.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.

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

13.6. {The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date}. OR {Any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made {quarterly where the claim exceeds [£100] and} at least annually at the end of the financial year.}

13.7. {Where significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control record such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.}

13.8. {Any income that is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting.}

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

14.1. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the

contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the works.

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

15. Stores and equipment

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

16. Assets, properties and estates

- 16.1. The Clerk shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.
- 16.2. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 16.3. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.
- 16.4. No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).

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

17. Insurance

- 17.1. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management.
- 17.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to [the RFO] of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 17.3. The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to [the council] at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers {in consultation with the Clerk}.
- 17.4. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined [annually] by the council, or duly delegated committee.

18. [Charities]

- 18.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and 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 and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.]

19. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

- 19.1. The council shall review these Financial Regulations [annually] and following any change of clerk or RFO. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.
- 19.2. The council may, by resolution duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.
- 19.3. The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 1 - Tender process

- 1) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- 2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the council.
- 3) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- 5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order [insert reference of the council's relevant standing order] and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on [date of full Council meetingenter date].

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1. General

- 1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.
- 1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.4. In these Financial Regulations:
 - 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
 - "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
 - "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
 - 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*
 - *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
 - 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
 - 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.
- 1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. ~~– [The Clerk has been appointed as RFO and these regulations apply accordingly.]~~ The RFO;
 - acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
 - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;

- ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;
- seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the council.

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1.6. **The council must not delegate any decision regarding:**

- **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);**
- **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls**
- **approving accounting statements;**
- **approving an annual governance statement;**
- **borrowing;**
- **declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and**
- **addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors**

1.7. In addition, the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of £5,000;

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2. Risk management and internal control

- 2.1. The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.**
- 2.2. The Clerk [with the RFO] shall prepare, for approval by Policy, Governance and Finance Committee (the council), a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 2.3. When considering any new activity, the Clerk [with the RFO] shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.
- 2.4. At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.**
- 2.5. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:**
 - ensure that risk is appropriately managed;

- ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;
- prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and
- allow the reconstitution of any lost records;
- identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and
- ensure division of responsibilities.

~~2.6. At least [once in each quarter], and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair (or a cheque signatory) shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council (Finance Committee).~~

2.6. Copies of all bank reconciliations and the statements showing account balances at the end of each month shall be presented in a timely manner by the RFO for approval at the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee.

2.7. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. Accounts and audit

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

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

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

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

3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual ~~{Governance and Accountability}~~ Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

- 3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.
- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by ~~the council~~ and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.
- 3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
- is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of ~~two~~ one written reports during each financial year;
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - has no involvement in the management or control of the ~~council~~ council.
- 3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties for the council;
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions;
 - provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.
- 3.11. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

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

3.12.

4. Budget and precept

- 4.1. Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its ~~{council tax (England)/budget (Wales)}~~ requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.
- 4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by ~~{the council}~~ each committee at least annually ~~in {October}~~ as part of the "budget cycle" for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule of the complete budget, signed by the Town Clerk and Mayor following approval of the precept. ~~the {Chair of the Council or relevant committee}~~. {The RFO will inform committees of any salary implications before they consider their draft budgets.}
- 4.3. No later than ~~{month}~~ December each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all ~~{receipts and payments}~~ income and expenditure for the following financial year ~~{along with a forecast for the following {four three} financial years}~~, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.
- 4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year although the Council may transfer them to an earmarked reserve for provide for future expenditure if this is, in the opinion of the RFO, affordable and prudent. {Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward (by placing them in an earmarked reserve) with the formal approval of the full council.}
- 4.5. Each committee ~~{if any}~~ shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the council ~~{finance committee}~~ Policy, Governance and Finance Committee not later than the end of ~~{November}~~ December each year.
- 4.6. The draft budget ~~{with any committee proposals and {three year}}~~ forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee ~~{finance committee and a which may make recommendations made to the}~~ council.
- 4.7. Having considered the proposed budget and ~~{three year}~~ four year forecast, the council shall determine its ~~{council tax (England)/budget (Wales)}~~ requirement by

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The Council's accounting software allows for forward budgets for next and the following four years.

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setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than ~~the~~ end of January for the ensuing financial year.

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

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

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

- 4.11. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process. However the Council may by resolution delegate to individual committees the powers to utilise specific earmarked reserves for expenditure. Note that unless an earmarked reserve comprises capital receipts or restricted funds (e.g. a grant given to the Council for a specific purpose), they shall be considered to comprise unrestricted revenue funds and therefore a specific earmarked reserve may be, by Council resolution, returned to the general fund at any time. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council (or relevant committee).

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5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.**

Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.

- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.

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

- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulations 2024 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**

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

- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed ~~£659,000~~ including VAT, the Town Clerk shall ~~seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the relevant committee council~~ OR ~~advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation~~. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation regarding the publication of invitations and notices.**
- 5.8. For contracts greater than ~~£3,000~~ £5,000 excluding VAT the Town Clerk or duly authorised officer Clerk ~~or RFO~~ shall seek at least [3] fixed-price quotes;
- 5.9. where the value is between ~~£500~~ and ~~£53,000~~ excluding VAT, the Town Clerk or duly authorised officer shall have executive power Clerk ~~or RFO~~ and shall try to obtain ~~three~~ 3 estimates ~~which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.~~
- 5.10. For smaller purchases, ~~the clerk~~ Town Clerk of duly authorised officer shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 5.11. **Contracts must not be split to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:
- i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - ii. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - iii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
 - iv. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
 - v. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.
- 5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee ~~council or relevant committee~~. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 5.14. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- ~~5.15.~~ Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by: the Town Clerk, under delegated authority. The Town Clerk has the discretion to seek the advice or approval of the relevant committee if deemed necessary.
- 5.15.

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~~the Clerk~~, under delegated authority, for any items below ~~£500~~ excluding VAT.
Payments

~~the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council (or Chair of the appropriate committee), for any items below £2,000~~ excluding VAT.

~~{a duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items under £5,000} excluding VAT}~~

~~5.16. {in respect of grants shall be made following agreement by the Council within the budget set, a duly authorised committee within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council.}~~

~~the council for all items over £5,000;~~

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

~~5.16-5.17.~~ No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order ~~{unless instructed to do so in advance by a resolution of the council}~~, or make any contract on behalf of the council.

~~5.17. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council (or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference) except in an emergency.~~

~~5.18. 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'). Conditions regarding these are as follows:-~~

~~(a) Within the same cost centre a departmental head may recommend to the RFO transfers between budget lines provided that this does not distort Council policy, and that the RFO may authorise such transfers provided that this does not distort Council policy.~~

~~(b) A committee may authorise a reallocation of resources between its departments/cost centres.~~

~~(c) A reallocation of resources between committees will require the approval of the Council, acting on the advice of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and the committees concerned.~~

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(d) A reallocation of resources between capital projects will require the approval of the Council, acting on the advice of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and the committees concerned.

5.18.5.19. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the Town Clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £5,000 ~~£2,000~~ excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Town Clerk shall report such action to the Chair of the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee as soon as reasonably possible and to ~~the council~~ as soon as practicable thereafter.

5.19.5.20. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless ~~the council~~ is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

5.20.5.21. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services ~~above £250~~ excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.

5.21.5.22. ~~Any ordering system can be misused and~~ Access to any ordering system them shall be controlled by ~~the RFO~~ to avoid misuse.

6. Banking and payments

6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO in consultation with the Town Clerk and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with ~~name bank~~ Barclays Bank. The arrangements shall be reviewed ~~annually~~ for security and efficiency.

6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. ~~Wherever possible, For~~ payments in excess of £5,000 more than one person should be involved in any payment, ~~for example~~ by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.

~~6.3.~~ All purchase invoices shall be authorised by the appropriate Head of Service or officer prior to them being passed to Finance for payment. Each initial purchase invoice shall be supported by a purchase order which is attached to the invoice. Subsequent invoices for the same goods or service do not require additional

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purchase orders. Each purchase invoice shall be coded to a cost centre / account code for which the authoriser has authority to charge to and which has sufficient budget available. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by [the RFO]. (Where the certification of invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a statement by the RFO that all invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO).

6.3.

6.4. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Head of Service or officer/budget holder 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 through its budget setting process. All invoices shall be coded by the Head of Service or Officer to a budget area appropriate to the nature of the invoice.

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6.5. The Admin Support Assistant or RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading.

6.6. All invoices shall also be examined and then countersigned by the RFO or in their absence the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available payment run as appropriate.

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6.7. Officers authorised to sign off purchase invoices and purchase orders within agreed limits up to £1,000 without requiring authorisation by the Town Clerk are:

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a. Biodiversity and Green Spaces Officer

b. Communications & Community Engagement Officer

c. Compliance & Environment Officer

d. Deputy Town Clerk

e. Head of Estates and Operations

f. Operations Manager

g. PA to Town Clerk

h. Project Officer

i. Responsible Financial Officer

j. Senior Admin Officer and Committee Clerk

k. Town Clerk and Chief Executive Officer

I. Venue & Events Officer

6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.

6.5-6.8. All payments shall be made by ~~{online banking/cheque}~~, in accordance with a resolution of the council ~~{or duly delegated committee}~~~~{or a delegated decision by an officer}~~, unless ~~{the council}~~ resolves to use a different payment method.

6.6-6.9. ~~{For each financial year {the RFO} may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the council {or a duly delegated committee} Policy, Governance and Finance Committee may authorise in advance for the year}.~~

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

~~6.8. {A list of such payments shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the council or Finance Committee} for information only.~~

6.10. The Town Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority:

a. ~~to authorise payments within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure. The Town Clerk has the discretion to seek the advice or approval of the relevant committee if deemed necessary.~~

6.9. ~~{only} in the following circumstances:~~

i. ~~{any payments of up to {£500} excluding VAT, within an agreed budget}.~~

b. payments of up to £5,000~~{£2,000}~~ excluding VAT, where there is no budget available in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.

ii. ~~_____~~

iii. ~~any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 {or to comply with contractual terms}, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of {the council}, where the {Clerk 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}.~~

a. 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}.~~

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~~6.10-6.11.~~ The RFO shall present a schedule of payments ~~requiring authorisation made under delegated powers,~~ forming part of the agenda for the meeting, ~~together with the relevant invoices,~~ to the ~~council (or finance committee).~~ Policy, Governance and Finance Committee. The ~~Committee council (or committee)~~ shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, ~~shall authorise payment approve the payments~~ by resolution. ~~The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last item by the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.~~

7. Electronic payments

7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, ~~{the RFO}~~ shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. ~~The bank mandate agreed by the council shall detail the arrangements for execution of payments. Payments of up to £5,000 may be authorised by the Town Clerk/CEO or the Deputy Town Clerk. Payments of £5,000 or more must be authorised by two Councillors. identify [a number of] councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process. {The Clerk may be an authorised signatory, but No~~ signatory should be involved in approving any payment to themselves.}

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

7.3. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.

7.4. The Service Administrator (RFO) shall set up all items due for payment online, which are assigned a payment reference, which is known as the ELP – Electronic Payment Number. The RFO may delegate this task to the Admin Support Assistant.

~~7.4-7.5.~~ All electronic payments shall be processed at the Council's offices. When signatories are authorising payments they shall be given aA list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, which they will be required to sign when authorising the payments. ~~shall be sent [by email] to [two] authorised signatories.~~

~~7.5-7.6.~~ In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator the Town Clerk/ CEO shall make arrangements for another council officer to ~~{an authorised signatory}~~ shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.

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~~7.6. Two [councillors who are] authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.~~

7.7. Evidence shall be retained showing ~~which members who~~ approved the payment online. ~~The ELP will be written on the invoice together with the payment date. A file will be retained with a -and a printout each time an electronic payment is made. of the transaction confirming that the payment has been made shall be appended to the invoice for audit purposes-.~~

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~~7.8. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next [council] meeting (and appended to the minutes).~~

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~~7.9-7.8. The Town Clerk/ CEO may determine that R~~With the approval of ~~[the council]~~ in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are ~~[signed/approved online] by [two authorised members]-Signed in accordance with the bank mandate. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by [the council] at least every two years.~~

~~7.10-7.9. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS in accordance with the bank mandate by resolution of [the council]-provided that each payment is approved online by [two authorised bank signatories], authorised signatories (see 7.1 above), evidence is retained and any payments are reported, together with other payments made, to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee. -to [the council] at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.~~

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~~7.11-7.10. If thought appropriate by the council-Town Clerk/ CEO regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed {or approved online} by [two members], in accordance with ethe bank mandate, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported , together with other payments made, to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee. to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by [the council] at least every two years.~~

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~~7.12-7.11. Bank account details of suppliers are a potential area for fraud and therefore reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that they are genuine. When the first electronic payment is made to a supplier the bank a~~Account details ~~which have been submitted by the supplier for suppliers will be verified by the RFO or another member of staff at their direction, in accordance with the advice of the Council's bankers. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the RFO [two of] the Clerk and [the RFO] [a~~

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~~member} or another member at his direction in accordance with the advice of the Council's bankers. — This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every {two years}.~~

~~7.13.7.12.~~ Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.

~~7.14.7.13.~~ Remembered password facilities {other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification} should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. Cheque payments

8.1. Cheques or orders for payment for up to £5,000 and which are made in accordance in accordance with a resolution or ~~or~~ delegated decision shall be signed by the Town Clerk or {two members. Cheques of £5,000 or more shall be signed by two members. In addition cheques of up to £500 and which required to reimburse the petty cash only, may be signed by the Deputy Town Clerk or RFO. } ~~{and countersigned by the Clerk}.~~

8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.

8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.

~~8.4. {Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at, or immediately before or after a council {or committee} meeting}. Any signatures obtained away from council meetings shall be reported to the council {or Finance Committee} at the next convenient meeting.~~

9. Payment cards

9.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to ~~{the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk (in the Town Clerk's absence) the RFO}~~ and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of ~~£1,000{£500}~~ unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.

9.2. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee. ~~{the council}.~~ Transactions and purchases made will be reported to ~~{the council the Committee. }~~ and a Authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the Town Clerk. ~~{the council}.~~

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9.3. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk (in the Town Clerk's absence) ~~(and RFO) (specify other officers)~~ and any balance shall be paid in full each month.

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9.4. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used ~~(under any circumstances.) OR (except for expenses of up to £500 (£250) including VAT in a single transaction,~~ incurred in accordance with council policy and budget.

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10. Petty Cash

10.1. ~~(The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by the Clerk (or RFO) (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.) OR (The RFO shall maintain a petty cash [float/imprest account] of £500 (£250) and may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.~~

- a) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept, along with receipts to substantiate every payment.
- b) Cash 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 any schedule of payments presented for approval.

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

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

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

11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Personnel Sub-Committee, Policy, Governance and Finance Committee or full council ~~(or relevant committee).~~

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11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.

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

11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record by the RFO, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by ~~[the finance committee]~~ the Town Clerk to] to ensure that the correct payments have been made.

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11.7. Each 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;

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a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know to the Town Clerk;

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b) by the internal auditor;

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c) by the external auditor; or

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

~~11.6.~~

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11.8. 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.

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11.9 Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the Personnel Sub-Committee ~~council~~, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council. ~~Policy, Governance and Finance Committee.~~

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~~11.7.~~

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~~11.8.~~ 11.10 Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case. However this will not be required if there is an existing budgetary provision and as long as this does not distort council policy.

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12. Loans and investments

12.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.

12.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the ~~[Secretary of State/Welsh Assembly Government]~~ (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the full council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.

- 12.3. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 12.4. All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 12.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 12.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

13. Income

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

13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process and included in the reports of the RFO to the various committees. ~~following a report of the Clerk.~~ ~~{The RFO}~~ shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.

~~13.2.~~

13.3. Individual sums of £100 or more which are considered by the RFO to be irrecoverable shall be reported to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and shall be written off by the full Council, subject to a resolution of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee. Individual sums of less than £100 may be written off by the RFO with the agreement of the Town Clerk or in their prolonged absence, the Deputy Town Clerk.

~~13.3-13.4.~~ Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by ~~{the RFO}~~ and shall be written off in the year when they considered that the debt is irrecoverable. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.

13.4-13.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.

13.5-13.6. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.

13.6-13.7. ~~{The RFO}~~ shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the

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software by the due date}. OR {Any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made {quarterly where the claim exceeds [£100] and} at least annually at the end of the financial year.}

~~13.7. The RFO shall ensure that a cash handling procedure is effective to avoid any losses, including fraud and that other appropriate controls are in place. Banking of cash shall be undertaken in accordance with the conditions set out in the Council's insurance policy document, which for 2025-26 is in part D (Money), section 5. {Where significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control record such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.}~~

Commented [NW16]: 13.8 AND 13.9 WILL BE SUBJECT TO FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY OFFICERS

~~13.8. {Any income that is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting.}~~

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14. **Payments under contracts for building or other construction works**

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

Commented [NW17]: SECTIONS 14,15 AND 16 CURRENTLY REFLECT THE MODEL AND SO WILL BE SUBJECT TO FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY OFFICERS AHEAD OF THE MEETING ON 9 JUNE 2025.

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

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15. **Stores and equipment**

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

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

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

15.4. ~~{The senior manager in each section}~~ ~~The RFO~~ shall be responsible for ensuring that they or another officer conduct periodic checks of stocks and stores, at least

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annually. This may be, as in the case of the café/bar, be contracted to an external professional.}

16. Assets, properties and estates

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

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16.2. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

16.3. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

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

16.5. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of unless the Council has made budgetary provision for such property and any other consents required by law have been obtained.

Commented [NW18]: 16.5, 16.6 and 16.7 are in accordance with current FRs

16.6. Inventories shall be maintained by all departments and therein shall be recorded an adequate description of furniture, fittings and equipment, plant and machinery. All inventories shall be in a form approved by the RFO, who in consultation with the Town Clerk may agree that certain items may be excluded from the records.

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16.7. Each departmental head shall be responsible for maintaining an annual check of all items on the inventory, for taking action in relation to surpluses or deficiencies and noting the inventory accordingly, and possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

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

17. Insurance

- 17.1. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management in consultation with other council officers as appropriate.
- 17.2. Each officer ~~The Clerk~~ shall give prompt notification to ~~the RFO~~ of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 17.3. The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to ~~the council~~ Policy, Governance and Finance Committee at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers {in consultation with the Town Clerk/ CEO}.
- 17.4. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined ~~annually~~ by the council, or duly delegated committee.

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~~18. [Charities]~~

- ~~18.1. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and 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 and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.]~~

Commented [NW19]: Not applicable for WTC

~~19.18. 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 Town 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.
- ~~19.1.~~ The council shall review these Financial Regulations [annually] and following any change of clerk or RFO. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.
- ~~19.2.~~ 18.2 The council may, by resolution duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.

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~~49.3.18.3~~ The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

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Appendix 1 - Tender process

- 1) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to and in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Procurement Policy and any other policies which the Council may have in place and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 2) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- 3) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Town Clerk/CEO in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the Town Clerk/CEO council.
- 4) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Town Clerk/CEO in the presence of at least one member of council.
- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- 5) ~~Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order [insert reference of the council's relevant standing order] and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.~~
- 6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

Commented [NW20]: FOR FURTHER OFFICER REVIEW

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WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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

1. General

- 1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.
- 1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.4. In these Financial Regulations:
 - 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
 - "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
 - "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
 - 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*
 - *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
 - 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
 - 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.
- 1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. The RFO;
 - acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
 - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;

- seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the council.

1.6. The council must not delegate any decision regarding:

- **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);**
- **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls**
- **approving accounting statements;**
- **approving an annual governance statement;**
- **borrowing;**
- **declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and**
- **addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors**

1.7. In addition, the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of [£5,000];

2. Risk management and internal control

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

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

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

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

2.5. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:

- **ensure that risk is appropriately managed;**
- **ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;**

- **prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and**
 - **allow the reconstitution of any lost records;**
 - **identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and**
 - **ensure division of responsibilities.**
- 2.6. Copies of all bank reconciliations and the statements showing account balances at the end of each month shall be presented in a timely manner by the RFO for approval at the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee.
- 2.7. Regular back-up copies shall be made of the records on any council computer and stored either online or in a separate location from the computer. The council shall put measures in place to ensure that the ability to access any council computer is not lost if an employee leaves or is incapacitated for any reason.

3. Accounts and audit

- 3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**
- **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;**
 - **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- 3.4. The RFO shall complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or

external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.

- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the council and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.
- 3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
- is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of two written reports during each financial year;
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - has no involvement in the management or control of the council.
- 3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties for the council;
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions;
 - provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.
- 3.11. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.12. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

4. Budget and precept

- 4.1. Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its council tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**
- 4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by each committee at least annually as part of the “budget cycle” for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule of the complete budget, signed by the Town Clerk and Mayor following approval of the precept. The RFO will inform committees of any salary implications before they consider their draft budgets.
- 4.3. No later than December each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all income and expenditure for the following financial year along with a forecast for the following four financial years, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.
- 4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year although the Council may transfer them to an earmarked reserve for provide for future expenditure if this is, in the opinion of the RFO, affordable and prudent. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward (by placing them in an earmarked reserve) with the formal approval of the full council.
- 4.5. Each committee shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the council Policy, Governance and Finance Committee not later than the end of December each year.
- 4.6. The draft budget forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee which may make recommendations to the council.
- 4.7. Having considered the proposed budget and four-year forecast, the council shall determine its council tax (England) requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of January for the ensuing financial year.
- 4.8. Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.9. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.

- 4.10. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.11. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process. However the Council may by resolution delegate to individual committees the powers to utilise specific earmarked reserves for expenditure. Note that unless an earmarked reserve comprises capital receipts or restricted funds (e.g. a grant given to the Council for a specific purpose), they shall be considered to comprise unrestricted revenue funds and therefore a specific earmarked reserve may be, by Council resolution, returned to the general fund at any time.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulations 2024 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 5.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed £65,000 including VAT, the Town Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the relevant committee OR advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation regarding the publication of invitations and notices.**
- 5.8. For contracts greater than £5,000 excluding VAT the Town Clerk or duly authorised officer shall seek at least [3] fixed-price quotes;

- 5.9. where the value is between £500 and £5,000 excluding VAT, the Town Clerk or duly authorised officer shall have executive power and shall try to obtain three estimates which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.
- 5.10. For smaller purchases, Town Clerk or duly authorised officer shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 5.11. **Contracts must not be split to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:
- i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - ii. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - iii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
 - iv. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
 - v. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.
- 5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 5.14. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by the Town Clerk, under delegated authority. The Town Clerk has the discretion to seek the advice or approval of the relevant committee if deemed necessary.
- 5.16. Payments in respect of grants shall be made following agreement by the Council within the budget set and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council.}
- 5.17. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- 5.18. 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'). Conditions regarding these are as follows:-

- (a) Within the same cost centre a departmental head may recommend to the RFO transfers between budget lines provided that this does not distort Council policy, and that the RFO may authorise such transfers provided that this does not distort Council policy.
- (b) A committee may authorise a reallocation of resources between its departments/cost centres.
- (c) A reallocation of resources between committees will require the approval of the Council, acting on the advice of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and the committees concerned.
- (d) A reallocation of resources between capital projects will require the approval of the Council, acting on the advice of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and the committees concerned.

5.19. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the Town Clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £5,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Town Clerk shall report such action to the Chair of the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee as soon as reasonably possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

5.20. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

5.21. 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, along with evidence of receipt of goods.

5.22. Access to any ordering system shall be controlled by the RFO to avoid misuse

6. Banking and payments

6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO in consultation with the Town Clerk and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with Barclays Bank. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.

- 6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. For payments in excess of £5,000 more than one person should be involved in any payment, by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.
- 6.3. All purchase invoices shall be authorised by the appropriate Head of Service or officer prior to them being passed to Finance for payment. Each initial purchase invoice shall be supported by a purchase order which is attached to the invoice. Subsequent invoices for the same goods or service do not require additional purchase orders. Each purchase invoice shall be coded to a cost centre / account code for which the authoriser has authority to charge to and which has sufficient budget available.
- 6.4. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Head of Service or officer/budget holder 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 through its budget setting process. All invoices shall be coded by the Head of Service or Officer to a budget area appropriate to the nature of the invoice.
- 6.5. The Admin Support Assistant or RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading.
- 6.6. All invoices shall also be examined and then countersigned by the RFO or in their absence the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available payment run as appropriate.
- 6.7. Officers authorised to sign off purchase invoices and purchase orders within agreed limits up to £1,000 without requiring authorisation by the Town Clerk are:
 - a. Biodiversity and Green Spaces Officer
 - b. Communications & Community Engagement Officer
 - c. Compliance & Environment Officer
 - d. Deputy Town Clerk
 - e. Head of Estates and Operations
 - f. Operations Manager
 - g. PA to Town Clerk
 - h. Project Officer

- i. Responsible Financial Officer
- j. Senior Admin Officer and Committee Clerk
- k. Town Clerk and Chief Executive Officer
- l. Venue & Events Officer

Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.

- 6.8. All payments shall be made by online banking/cheque, in accordance with a resolution of the council unless the council resolves to use a different payment method.
- 6.9. For each financial year the RFO may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee may authorise in advance for the year.
- 6.10. The Town Clerk shall have delegated authority:
 - a. to authorise payments within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure. The Town Clerk has the discretion to seek the advice or approval of the relevant committee if deemed necessary.
 - b. payments of up to £5,000 excluding VAT where there is no budget available in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
 - c. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements.
- 6.11. The RFO shall present a schedule of payments made under delegated powers, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee. The Committee shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, approve the payments by resolution.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall detail the arrangements for execution of payments. Payments of up to £5,000 may be authorised by the Town Clerk/CEO or the Deputy Town Clerk. Payments of £5,000 or more must be authorised by two Councillors. No signatory should be involved in approving any payment to themselves.}

- 7.2. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.
- 7.3. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 7.4. The Service Administrator (RFO) shall set up all items due for payment online, which are assigned a payment reference, which is known as the ELP – Electronic Payment Number. The RFO may delegate this task to the Admin Support Assistant.
- 7.5. All electronic payments shall be processed at the Council's offices. When signatories are authorising payments they shall be given a list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, which they will be required to sign when authorising the payments.
- 7.6. In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator the Town Clerk/ CEO shall make arrangements for another council officer to set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.
- 7.7. Evidence shall be retained showing who approved the payment online. The ELP will be written on the invoice together with the payment date. A file will be retained with a printout each time an electronic payment is made.
- 7.8. The Town Clerk/ CEO may determine that Regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are Signed in accordance with the bank mandate.
- 7.9. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS in accordance with the bank mandate provided that each payment is approved online by authorised signatories (see 7.1 above), evidence is retained and any payments are reported, together with other payments made, to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee.
- 7.10. If thought appropriate by the Town Clerk/ CEO regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed or approved online in accordance with the bank mandate, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported, together with other payments made, to the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee.
- 7.11. Bank account details of suppliers are a potential area for fraud and therefore reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that they are genuine. When the first electronic payment is made to a supplier the bank account details which have been submitted by the supplier will be verified by the RFO or another member of staff at their direction, in accordance with the advice of the Council's bankers. Account

details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the RFO or another member at his direction in accordance with the advice of the Council's bankers.

7.12. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.

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

8. Cheque payments

8.1. Cheques or orders for payment for up to £5,000 and which are made in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by the Town Clerk or two members. Cheques of £5,000 or more shall be signed by two members. In addition cheques of up to £500 and which required to reimburse the petty cash only, may be signed by the Deputy Town Clerk or RFO.

8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment.

8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and invoice.

9. Payment cards

9.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk (in the Town Clerk's absence) and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1,000 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.

9.2. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the Committee. Authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the Town Clerk.

9.3. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk (in the Town Clerk's absence) and any balance shall be paid in full each month.

9.4. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used except for expenses of up to £500 including VAT in a single transaction, incurred in accordance with council policy and budget.

10. Petty Cash

10.1. The RFO shall maintain a petty cash [float/imprest account] of £500 and may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.

- a) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept, along with receipts to substantiate every payment.
- b) Cash 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 any schedule of payments presented for approval.

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

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

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

11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Personnel Sub-Committee, Policy, Governance and Finance Committee or full council.

11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.

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

11.6. Each payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record by the RFO, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. Payroll reports will be reviewed by [the Town Clerk to ensure that the correct payments have been made.

11.7. Each 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 to the Town Clerk;
- 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.

11.8 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.

11.9 Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the Personnel Sub-Committee, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the Policy, Governance and Finance Committee.

11.10 Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case. However this will not be required if there is an existing budgetary provision and as long as this does not distort council policy.

12. Loans and investments

12.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.

12.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the full council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.

12.3. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

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

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

12.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these regulations.

13. Income

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

13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process and included in

the reports of the RFO to the various committees. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.

13.3. Individual sums of £100 or more which are considered by the RFO to be irrecoverable shall be reported to the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee and shall be written off by the full Council, subject to a resolution of the Policy, Governance & Finance Committee. Individual sums of less than £100 may be written off by the RFO with the agreement of the Town Clerk or in their prolonged absence, the Deputy Town Clerk.

13.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO when they considered that the debt is irrecoverable. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.

13.5. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.

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

13.7. The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date.

The RFO shall ensure that a cash handling procedure is effective to avoid any losses, including fraud and that other appropriate controls are in place. Banking of cash shall be undertaken in accordance with the conditions set out in the Council's insurance policy document, which for 2025-26 is in part D (Money), section 5.

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

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

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

15. Stores and equipment

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

- 15.2. Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered and goods must be checked as to order and quality at the time delivery is made.
- 15.3. Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 15.4. The senior manager in each section shall be responsible for ensuring that they or another officer conduct periodic checks of stocks and stores, at least annually. This may be, as in the case of the café/bar, be contracted to an external professional.

16. Assets, properties and estates

- 16.1. The Town Clerk/CEO shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.
- 16.2. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 16.3. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually.
- 16.4. No interest in land shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council, via the relevant committee(s) in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate where required by law).
- 16.5. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of unless the Council has made budgetary provision for such property and any other consents required by law have been obtained.
- 16.6. Inventories shall be maintained by all departments and therein shall be recorded an adequate description of furniture, fittings and equipment, plant and machinery. All inventories shall be in a form approved by the RFO, who in consultation with the Town Clerk may agree that certain items may be excluded from the records.
- 16.7. Each departmental head shall be responsible for maintaining an annual check of all items on the inventory, for taking action in relation to surpluses or deficiencies and noting the inventory accordingly, and possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

17. Insurance

- 17.1. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the council's review of risk management in consultation with other council officers as appropriate.
- 17.2. Each officer shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 17.3. The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to Policy, Governance and Finance Committee at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers {in consultation with the Town Clerk/ CEO}.
- 17.4. All appropriate members and employees of the council shall be included in a suitable form of security or fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the council, or duly delegated committee.

18. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

- 18.1 It shall be the duty of the Council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The Town 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 duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations, provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been presented to all members. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.
- 18.3 The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 1 - Tender process

- 1) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to and in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Procurement Policy and any other policies which the Council may have in place and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 2) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- 3) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Town Clerk/CEO in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the Town Clerk/CEO
- 4) Where a postal process is used, each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Town Clerk/CEO in the presence of at least one member of council.
- 5) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- 6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

Witney Town Council



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

**Community
Engagement Strategy
2025**

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Introduction

The purpose of Witney Town Council's Community Engagement Strategy is to assess and enhance the quality and effectiveness of our interactions with the local community. By seeking feedback and encouraging open dialogue, participation and inclusion we will build stronger trust-based relationships with our community, leading to an improved reputation and better understanding of what Witney Town Council does.

Actively engaging with and listening to the views and aspirations of our community members, ensures that the council's actions align with the genuine needs and concerns of those within our town. This approach enables the provision of appropriate activities, facilities, and services that effectively promote the overall well-being and priorities of all our residents.

We are starting from a strong position. As a council, we create lots of opportunities for community engagement, but we need to ensure that as a body and as individuals we are making the most of all of them. While we are looking at innovation and finding new ways to reach people, Witney was identified as an ageing town ([Oxfordshire Data Hub](#)) and this needs to be taken in to account to ensure that no one is 'left behind'.

What is Community Engagement?

Quite simply, Community Engagement is about getting to know the people in a community and building meaningful relationships and connections. It involves, sharing information in a two-way exchange and working together in different ways to bring about change. Good Community Engagement is an ongoing thing and needs to be flexible and agile to adapt in response to new initiatives and opportunities. It is the process by which we get people to have an active involvement in council business and encourage them to influence decision making and services.

There are five levels at which engagement occurs, from minimal involvement to substantial participation. These levels include: Informing, Consulting, Involving, Collaborating and Empowering.





Aims

This Community Engagement Strategy aims to equip Witney Town Council to better cater to the needs of local residents, the following objectives are essential:

- **Understand and respond** effectively to the needs of the community.
- **Increase accountability** to local residents.
- **Plan and deliver** improved services.
- **Use public resources** more efficiently.
- **Make transparent decisions** grounded in strong evidence.
- **Build strong, positive relationships** within and across local communities.
- **Test ideas** and explore emerging issues.

The strategy will also aim to measure the Council's performance in service delivery. The local community will benefit by:

- Having a **greater say** and more choices in designing and delivering services.
- Developing **new skills and expertise**.
- Becoming **better informed** about the Council's initiatives.
- Engaging in **accessible conversations** about important issues.
- Building **trust and confidence** with the Council.
- Understanding how their **participation** has influenced decision-making processes.

Objectives

The following objectives set out how we are going to make certain that our engagement activity is flexible, focused, and appropriate for the diverse needs of the community:

Together the council will:

1. **Plan and co-ordinate activities**, collaborate in partnerships whenever possible and make the most effective use of our resources.
2. **Encourage active participation involvement from all communities**, especially those from traditionally under-represented groups or areas.
3. **Be open and creative** in defining the most appropriate relevant, engaging and successful approaches to consultations.
4. **Promote transparency and build trust** by communicating results and ensuring they are used to inform the Council's policies, services and decision-making processes.
5. **Build relationships** with communities to establish and maintain sustained engagement.



Who Do We Want to Engage With?

Alongside maintaining the many successful channels of Community Engagement that we already have we also need to seek to hear from those in the community not already engaged and expand our reach still further.

Everything we do must be accessible and inclusive as far as possible. We must make particular efforts to engage those who may not usually get involved in dialogues with their local council.

To that end, we are fortunate to have councillors that are working in the community with refugees and asylum seekers.

Councillors should be at the forefront of our community engagement. They have a unique perspective and understanding of what it's like to live in their ward and this equips them with specialist knowledge and equips them to represent and amplify the voices of their community.

Our ambition is to engage successfully with all of the following:

- young people
- older people
- service users
- all residents including minority groups
- people of differing abilities
- schools and colleges
- tourists and visitors
- people of different or no religion
- LGBT groups
- itinerant visitors
- local businesses
- community groups and organisations
- tenants and residents' associations and groups
- volunteers and voluntary groups
- neighbourhoods and wards
- public and private sector including other local councils

If we look at the source of most of the data we gather in our Annual Resident's Satisfaction Survey, the average age of those attending the Annual Town Meeting, the clientele at 1863 café, and many of the people that attend our events there is a heavy bias on older people. It would seem we are doing well at reaching them, but actually they are also the people who claim that they don't know what we do or what is going on unless it is in the Witney Gazette or they get a letter about it.



Below are some extracts from a recent report by **Centre For Towns**, an independent non-partisan organisation dedicated to providing research and analysis of our towns highlights that many young people are moving in to cities and larger towns leaving smaller towns and villages as 'ageing towns'. This should be taken into account when considering what we do and how we want to improve.

- **The Office for National Statistics currently projects that by 2046 there will be seven million more people aged 65 and over in the United Kingdom.**
- **Around three-quarters of the increase in 45 to 64-year olds and over 65s between 1981 and 2011 took place in villages, communities, small and medium sized towns.**



Barriers and Challenges

We must consider the collection of data gathered and ensure that any stored information complies with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Often engagement opportunities are lost because of the difficulties of bringing people to our events. This could be due to the availability of people during the event times, such as working people (including volunteers) lack of transport to events or winter weather or shorter days affecting the willingness of some to travel or be out in poor weather or low light. This might also affect and those under or over a certain age.

Inaccessibility of buildings and some venues may highlight problems for those with physical or mental disabilities or mobility issues.

There may be technical barriers such as a lack of equipment or inability to purchase tickets using an online system. Affordability and financial constraints can be a problem, though most of our community and civic events are free.

Apathy or lack of awareness about the events themselves may reduce the numbers attending.

There may be preconceived ideas about what a 'council' led event might be like.

Social barriers may exist for those that might experience a sense of 'not belonging' perhaps being new to the town, itinerant visitors, cultural differences, language barriers or those that are otherwise socially isolated.

Community Engagement may be stifled if we only engage with the same 'easy' demographic and don't make the effort to find new ways to reach out to groups who are experiencing barriers and provide information that they can and want to connect with.

Our Strategy - Ideas and Approaches

If people are not coming to events and meetings, we should explore ways to take more information out to them. We have previously considered roadshows and making information more mobile. We have held meet and greets with the Biodiversity and Green Spaces Officer at the Lake and Country Park and there may be ways we can expand on this.

- Taking information about our events services and activities into council wards might reach additional people. Staff and relevant ward councillors could set up a small event in a local community centre or school. It would be along the lines of Councillors in the Café but with more leaflets, newsletters and general information that we want to share.
- Councillors in the Café, could also become more mobile with Councillors taking a ride on the local WOCT bus services. 'Councillors on the Bus' provides a perfect opportunity to chat about things that matter to small groups of bus users at a time. This might also serve as an opportunity to let them know that the service is something that the Town Council has been instrumental in funding. Since most (though not all) of the bus users are older people, this will go some way to addressing the report that identifies Witney as an ageing town.





- A member of the Customer services team has expressed a wish to learn sign language when communicating with hearing impaired customers. This would be a good opportunity for staff to learn and could form part of a training plan for those that would like to undertake it. These are small things for marginal groups, but vital to some.
- Suggestion Boxes are still a useful way to gather instant feedback at our various sites – Tell Us About Your Visit Today. It is worth considering extending this to strategic locations such as libraries, surgeries or community centres, allowing residents who may prefer not to engage digitally or in person, to submit comments or suggestions anonymously.
- Explore offering an interactive activity at the Annual Town Meeting, such as a budget setting exercise to make the meeting more engaging. The activity needs to be quick and simple but at the same time thought provoking and a conversation starter. We are also looking to increase our engagement with under 18-year-olds at the Annual Town Meeting. Voting apps are likely to be something they are familiar with and comfortable using. These and similar apps could encourage other less confident residents to ask questions and participate in polls.
- **Webinars and Workshops. Use our new conferencing system to host live interaction webinars that focus on topics of interest or concern. Discussions could include councillors, officers and visiting experts.**



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

WELCOME TO



Witney



ST. MARY THE VIRGIN,
CHURCH GREEN, WITNEY

- The travelling community seldom responds to written information but do come in to see officers when they have particular concerns or issues. They also encounter works team staff in the cemeteries. This may be the best opportunity to make contact or discuss with them any major or extended work taking place in the cemetery such as memorial testing, creation of new areas or other matters that will be of interest to them. The chapel would be an ideal place to have staff in place for a few hours on days when the work is taking place. We could offer refreshments and ensure that office staff that are particularly informed regarding cemeteries and burials are available there.
- Talking news could record our spring newsletter to ensure that visually impaired people have access to an audio copy. We do give them a grant and many residents are used to getting news from the Witney Gazette in this way.
- The convenience of our Admin Office in the town centre means that we pick up a lot of calls and visits that should be fielded by other councils or organisations.
- **Although we are a small team, we aspire to be the benchmark for helpful and caring customer services. Officers have produced a flyer with useful contacts and other regularly asked for information, for customers. We have a reputation for being polite and helpful and that is something we should acknowledge and take pride in.**

- The Town Council previously sent out meeting agendas to the local press – this might be worth doing again, though they are available on social media and that is where the Gazette gleans much of its information. It would increase the amount of messaging they receive from us and hopefully strengthen their awareness of us as reporters come and go.
- Extend the mailing list for our press releases and pass relevant news on to schools, community groups, youth organisations and housing associations to share via their own newsletters. It would be worthwhile ensuring that a handful of printed issues of all our quarterly letters are delivered to care homes as these may not be included as residential addresses for the issue that is usually mailed out.
- Invest in additional noticeboards. We no longer have a noticeboard at the Leys while the Courtside Construction is taking place so officers will request a budget for three new noticeboards at the Leys to capture the different demographics at the splash/skatepark, the new Coffee shed and along the path that connects Station Lane businesses with Church Green
- Live stream the Mayor's Carols for all that cannot attend.
- Councillors have expressed a wish to include greater focus on young people and work on consulting with care homes to ensure they are communicated with. Continue to survey ask our Youth Councillors to find out how they discover what is going on in and around Town, what their sources of news and events are, and how best to engage with other young people.



Objectives	Actions
1. Plan and co-ordinate activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify engagement opportunities across the council's activities and committees through internal comms meetings. • Collaborate in partnerships whenever possible and make the most effective use of our resources • Consider any possible collaboration/partnership and make the most effective use of our resources
2. Encourage active participation involvement from all communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure accessibility and inclusion are considered for all events • Advertise events and other engagement in the areas where the target audience go • Hold appropriate events to encourage attendance from traditionally under-represented groups or areas
3. Be open and creative when consulting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailor methods of consulting to meet the specific needs of communities – young people , seniors etc • Define the most appropriate relevant, engaging and successful approaches to consultations. • Go to where the target audience are and adopt their preferred platforms and formats.
4. Promote transparency and build trust.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate results from surveys and consultations and ensure they are used to inform the Council's policies, services and decision-making processes. • Find ways to demonstrate and communicate the impact of responses on the decision-making process and actions taken – such as You Said – We Did • Ensure our communications are truthful and the information we share is reliable
5. Build relationships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to partner and support our community organisations • Demonstrate support for local community and business where possible by using local suppliers and engaging in relevant forums. • Continue to organise and attend our own and other community events and be visible and approachable at both

Evaluating and Measuring Success

We need to continuously review our Community Engagement activities and be prepared to be flexible and find new solutions and methods to improve Witney Town Council's relationships with residents.

It can be difficult to evaluate what works well and what approaches are less effective, but we can measure some success through tracking:

- Attendance at meetings of the Council and the Annual Town Meeting.
- Number of responses received to surveys, the quality of those responses and diversity of the respondents – age, ethnicity etc.
- Metrics from the website and interactions on social media platforms
- Attendance at Witney Town Council events and meetings



What We Already Do



- Police attend our meetings for an exchange of information
- The communication of the importance of consideration of Social Value and Biodiversity in our decision making (as in committee reports)
- Development of a Welcome to Witney Page with local information for newcomers to the town
- Digital signage
- Clear sign posting about TC services and responsibilities (Who Does What?)
- Clear and accessible website with reliable and up to date information
- Printed information in the form of newsletters, posters and other publications available to all. Last year we made the newsletter available on tables in 1863 in A5 format. The newsletter this year will be 8 pages A5 format and will be placed on tables again.
- Maps and leaflets of lake trails and emergency equipment such as defibrillators and life preservers.
- The admin office has leaflets containing useful information and contact numbers that they have compiled to hand out to customers.
- Annual Town Meeting
- Transparency- freely available minutes, agendas, policies and financial documents
- Broad range of Communications
 - o Press releases
 - o Newsletters
 - o Surveys
 - o Social media
 - o Posters
 - o In person events
- Staff and cross team meetings – to keep everyone informed and up to date so that they can confidently field enquiries and publicise reliable information
- Corporate branding and a recognisable logo. Building trust by highlighting that information is coming from a trustworthy and reliable source
- Employment of a Town Crier
- Custodianship of some historic civic artefacts and documents - .e.g older copies of local newspaper On the back of a Heritage Open Day event that showcased these, a member of the public who set up the Witney Memories Facebook page has asked if he can digitally scan all our old copies of gazettes to share on the page and in return he will provide us with digital copies too.

- Councillors in the café
- Attending third party events such as the carnival and using this as an opportunity to consult
- As a council take part in other consultations on matters that affect the town
- The Town Council is a consultee on Town planning applications
- Annual Residents' satisfaction survey has FREEPOST return to make sure anyone can reply for free.
- Survey responses are anonymous, because of the need for the protection of a large amount of personal data, but we can acknowledge and reply by creating You Said, We Did reports and posts
- Youth Council
- Consultations at all levels including simple consultations where appropriate- easy to take part - project specific consultations using stickers so children can select options for play equipment etc
- The Voice of Witney – opt-in feedback database
- Feedback cards and web surveys for Lake and Country Park and 1863 Café
- Parents of Young People feedback forms and Young People feedback forms



To Involve

- Witney flood prevention group have fed back how valued they felt. With the investment in desilting and sandbags and support of personal contact from officers, councillors and the works team. Again, this is resource intensive for a relatively small group, but of exceptional value to them. This is the case with some of our community engagement that perhaps does not reach a large number of people but the quality of that reach is hugely important to that target group.

An extract from their letter with some of the comments they made to us about their experience.

- o I wanted to thank you so much for your support in helping to improve our lives here and for making us feel more valued as a community.
- o I have spoken at a full Town Council meeting and at two committee meetings and was always met with respect and friendliness. When you're out of your comfort zone and a little nervous, that means a lot!
- o The residents were thrilled.
- o Thank you for taking the time to do that as it makes residents feel seen and cared about. You're always welcome to visit us.
- o The Town Operations team has helped to build sandbag walls in times of flooding and removed them when necessary, making residents feel less anxious.
- o We're very fortunate!

- Friends of the cemeteries
- Promoting community groups -Community Window
- Inclusivity and diversity group
- Mayor representing at events, openings and civic events





- Town Councillors represent the Council on outside bodies
- Attend Stakeholder and partner meetings – e.g. museum
- Officers attend area community, business and health forums
- We have working parties, task and finish groups and forum groups which can include members of the public.
- Encourage members of the public to attend and take part in meetings
- Apprentice scheme
- Work experience
- Our Admin Office is also registered as a WODC Safe Space (one of only 29 in Witney) which means that it offers a Safe Place for vulnerable people (such as those with dementia, learning disabilities or mental health needs) when they feel lost, worried or threatened while they're out and about in the town. The safe space is used by a very small minority but is absolutely crucial to those that do use it. It isn't just the elderly that use it. There have been interactions with other age groups that have needed to make use of it.
- Volunteers -Offer volunteer opportunities for community members to engage actively in council-led projects or events, fostering a sense of ownership and involvement
- Fairtrade Town
- Citizen of the Year Awards, acknowledging all the hard work that others do that benefit the town.
- Seasonal competitions –Christmas, Wild Witney etc.
- Cross generational events such as the Switch on event in the gallery room and Schools In Bloom wheelbarrows.
- The potential for resource sharing- such as our thermal camera
- Twinning Association support and promotion
- Collaboration and partnership working – a list of our partners is available on the website. Partnership working also includes initiatives such as Witney in Bloom, Schools in Bloom and the Tiny Forest.
- Although we have no direct business development remit, we do maintain a healthy relationship with local businesses and benefit from sponsorship by local businesses e.g. Christmas Trees and Lights. We have been invited to attend Town Centre forums which we previously facilitated and have recently been invited to the Chamber of Commerce meeting to explore the different services offered by Town and District Councils.
- Our events
- Civic events
- Community events
- 50th Anniversary events

- Promote democratic elections- ensure equal opportunities for people wanting to stand as councillors
- Encourage participation in elections, and in particular, voting in local elections
- Have a web page about what councillors do and how to become one. Promote recruitment of councillors and provide information for candidates
- Support new councillors with training and information that enables them to confidently represent and serve their communities as their elected
- Supporting local groups and events by providing grants and subsidised lettings such as the Music Festival. There has been some interest from the Music Festival and Youth Council in working together to support a 'Day of Culture'. This is a nice example of Community Engagement paying it forward.
- Subsidised Youth Services such as APCAM and The Station - Youth Outreach work to engage with young people we seldom hear from.
- The Mayor's Charities





I think there should be more seating provided by the council in and around public areas, there are some but I think people would enjoy picnic benches etc around for lunches



Assistance from town councillors even for issues outside direct control and responsibility has been excellent in the past couple of years and the improved accessibility of councillors and communication methods are exemplary



I believe the streets of Witney town and close to could be cleaner, regular litter picking, more bins along Welch Way, and larger ones around the town.



Nice to have a paper update in the post :)



The paths on High street and around Burwell/Deer Park road are uneven and unsafe for those with mobility issues



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

Witney Town Council

Community Engagement Strategy 2025

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Policy Document

Volunteer



Adopted by: Policy. Governance & Finance Committee. Minute no:
Date: 9 June 2025 (tbc)
Review Date: 09 June 2026

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1. Volunteering in Context

1.1. The goal of Witney Town Council's Volunteering Policy is:

- To encourage those who live, work, or study in Witney to actively participate in their community through the development of specific projects and events.
- To provide an access point for people of all ages and abilities to get involved in opportunities with Witney Town Council, local community groups, and organisations.

1.2. Purpose of the Volunteer Policy

The purpose of the policy is to provide overall guidance and direction to volunteers and staff engaged in volunteer activity and volunteer management. The policy is intended for guidance only, and does not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. Witney Town Council reserves the exclusive right to change any aspect of the policy at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policy.

1.3. Scope of the Volunteer Policy

Unless specifically stated, the policy applies to all volunteers registered with Witney Town Council.

1.4. Role of Witney Town Council staff

The involvement of volunteers requires a planned and organised effort. The function of the Witney Town Council's Volunteering team is:

- to provide a central co-ordinating point for effective volunteer opportunities and management for Witney Town Council Volunteers
- to provide appropriate support and training
- to maintain adequate and accessible records of volunteers, volunteering endeavours and achievements

1.5. Definition of a Volunteer

'A volunteer is any person who registers with Witney Town Council in order to perform a task or role with a community focus without compensation, or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement of expenses incurred in the course of their duties. Volunteers are not considered to be employees of Witney Town Council or the organisations with which they have contact through Witney Town Council Volunteering.'

1.6. Discretion

The participation of volunteers in activities organised by or facilitated through Witney Town Council's Volunteering is at the discretion of Witney Town Council and other

organisations involved in the activity. Volunteers must be willing to submit to appropriate checks before commencing volunteering as listed in the role description.

1.7. Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

Volunteers are viewed as a valuable asset to Witney Town Council and its staff. As a volunteer with the Council, we will expect you to follow all of our policies and codes of practice. You will be given more details on these during your induction by your Supervisor.

2. Volunteer Management Procedures

2.1. Maintenance of Records

A system of records will be maintained on each volunteer, including initial registration details, copies of all written communication, a log of personal telephone contact, reports or correspondence received from other organisations related to the volunteer, risk assessment and any other relevant documentation. Any personal data will be collected, used, and held, lawfully and appropriately in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

2.2. Photography and Videos

As part of our evaluation and future development we may wish to take photographs or videos of activities that involve volunteers.

The photographs and videos may be used on Witney Town Council's website, Facebook or Twitter pages and could be used for Witney Town Council press releases.

Before any photographs of volunteers can be printed, or videos be shown, the permission of the volunteer will be sought.

Photography or filming will only take place under appropriate supervision.

2.3. Representation of Witney Town Council

Prior to any action or statement that might significantly affect or obligate Witney Town Council, volunteers are requested to seek consultation and approval from the relevant Volunteer officer. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, collaborations or joint ventures, or any other agreements involving contractual or financial obligations. Volunteers are authorised to act as representatives of Witney Town Council if specifically indicated within their task and/or role description and only to the extent of such written specification.

2.4. Confidentiality

As a volunteer you may become aware of confidential information about Witney Town Council, its staff, users and suppliers. You must not disclose this information or use it

for your own (or another's) benefit without the consent of the party concerned. This does not prevent disclosure once the information is in the public domain.

2.5. Health and Safety

The Council has a duty of care to avoid exposing our volunteers to health and safety risks. All volunteers will be made aware of our Health and Safety Policy and any practical safety concerns as part of their induction. Volunteers are expected to comply with the Council's Health and Safety Policy.

All volunteer roles will be risk assessed, covering both the tasks involved and the environment in which they will be conducted. In addition, where a volunteer makes us aware of a pre-existing medical condition or disability, an individual risk assessment will be necessary.

The Council will provide you with the appropriate information, instruction, supervision and training required to enable you to work safely while volunteering at the Council.

2.6. Equal Opportunity

The Council is committed to the elimination of discrimination and promotion of equality of opportunity for all citizens and will work towards this goal, both in the provision of services and employment. We will do everything reasonably practical to make volunteering available to everybody and to conform to all relevant legislation. We want to create a good and harmonious working environment in which you should not feel threatened or intimidated.

3. Volunteer Recruitment and Selection

3.1. Role/Task Description

Volunteers require a clear, complete, and current description of the duties and responsibilities of their task or role. This role/task description should include a named supervisor and worksite. The Department Volunteer Coordinator is available to assist in the development of role/task descriptions.

3.2. Requests for Volunteers

Any organisation can volunteer with Witney Town Council. Any organisations wishing to offer opportunities through Witney Town Council Volunteering should be made initially through the member of Witney Town Council Volunteering. A partnership agreement for longer term volunteering with constituted groups will also be adapted for each group to outline the commitments on both sides and will be signed on behalf of the group and by the Council.

All parties should understand that the recruitment of volunteers is enhanced by creative and interesting tasks and roles and by well planned projects. The Department Volunteer Coordinator will direct appropriate volunteers to the opportunities but

holds no responsibility for the 'recruitment' of a volunteer into an opportunity. The organisation should apply their normal recruitment criteria to volunteers.

Witney Town Council reserve the right to refuse to promote an opportunity or place/recruit volunteers where they feel effective use will not be made of their skills and abilities or where it appears the placement may be unsafe or unsuitable.

3.3. Recruitment of Volunteers

Volunteers shall be recruited pro-actively through the medium of the Witney Town Council's Volunteering website (when established), posters, leaflets, internal press, events, and other means. Volunteers shall be recruited without regard to gender, disability, race, age, employment status or other distinction that may be viewed as discriminatory.

The sole qualification for volunteer recruitment shall be the suitability to perform a specified task or role on behalf of Witney Town Council or other organisation that has requested volunteers.

3.4. Selection

Witney Town Council will endeavour to offer guidance to help potential volunteers find a project that will best meet their skills, knowledge, and interests.

3.5. References and Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS, formally CRB)

Volunteers will be required to submit to a disclosure and barring service check before being placed if the role may result in the volunteer being unaccompanied with a minor or a vulnerable adult. Failure to do so will result in all placements being refused. A criminal conviction would not automatically result in a placement being refused - each case will be looked at individually. All information obtained will be kept confidential in line with the Council's data protection obligations.

Some roles may require a set of two references. If this is the case this will be stated clearly on the role/task description. Failure to do so will result in some placements being refused. A negative outcome from a reference may again result in a placement being refused but each case will be looked at individually.

4. Volunteer Training and Development

4.1. Orientation and Induction

All volunteers will receive an introduction to Witney Town Council. Each community placement will be responsible for providing volunteers with an induction. Volunteers taking part in Witney Town Council projects and events will be trained as needed for the opportunity.

4.2. On-going Training and Support

All volunteers will be provided with any necessary learning and development opportunities, and the support to perform the role. Some roles will require further training such as shadowing Council staff, carrying out duties with the support of staff or experienced volunteers, and learning skills via practical sessions. Refresher and extra training will also be provided as appropriate.

5. Volunteer Supervision and Evaluation

5.1. Requirement of a Supervisor

Each volunteer who performs a task or role for an organisation should have a named supervisor who is responsible for their direct management. In addition, the Department Volunteer Leader is available for consultation, guidance and assistance, in confidence where appropriate.

5.2. Commitment and Absenteeism

Witney Town Council recognises that external factors can affect a volunteer's ability to commit to a role over a longer period of time. Volunteers should be honest and open about their availability and the organisation should respect volunteer priorities. The Department Volunteer Leader is available to advise on such issues if required.

Volunteers are responsible for informing placements as soon as possible if they are unable to attend a session due to illness.

5.3. Placement End

There may be times when a placement feels it is in its best interest to end their relationship with a volunteer, either because they no longer wish to have a volunteer perform the role or they have issues with the volunteer's performance.

In the first instance, the placement is encouraged to talk to their relevant Witney Town Council volunteer officer about redeployment. In the second, the placement is requested to advise Witney Town Council regarding its decision and the Department Volunteer Coordinator will be available to offer guidance and advice to either party at any stage.

5.4. Concerns and Problem Solving

Volunteers who feel they may have concerns about their placement are encouraged to speak to the relevant Witney Town Council officer who will advise them of the appropriate action to take and will offer support throughout the process.

Volunteers who have concerns or grievances about Witney Town Council or its staff, and do not wish to discuss these with the relevant volunteer officer, should contact

the department Head of Service, who will deal with the concern or grievance as appropriate and in confidence where possible.

5.5. Communication

Volunteers are entitled to all necessary information pertinent to the performance of their tasks. Accordingly, volunteers should be included in and have access to all appropriate information, memos, materials, and meetings.

Lines of communication should operate in both directions and should exist both formally and informally. Volunteers should be consulted regarding all decisions which would substantially affect the performance of their duties.

5.6. Evaluation

Volunteers shall receive periodic evaluation to review their work. The evaluation session will review the performance of the volunteer, the skills developed, training needs identified, and any issues of concern raised by the volunteer.

6. Volunteer Support and Recognition

6.1. Reimbursement of Expenses

The Council is committed to paying reasonable 'out of pocket' expenses ensuring that potential volunteers are not excluded due to financial reasons. However, these need to be agreed in advance with relevant managers before the volunteer commences their activity. Where expenses are not agreed, volunteers must be made aware of this at the first opportunity in the recruitment process.

6.2. Insurance

All volunteers who are individually registered with and managed by the Council to work in connection with council business are automatically covered by the Council's insurance policies. The Council's insurance policies include coverage for Public Liability exposures, which covers any damage or injuries to members of the public or their property caused by the negligent actions of our volunteers whilst under supervision of the Council. The policies will also protect the volunteers under the Council's Employers Liability coverage, should they suffer an injury in the course of their duties and where the council are found to have acted negligently. Personal Accident coverage does have some age related exclusions, and this will be discussed with the volunteer and included within the specific risk assessment for the volunteer.

Please note that constituted groups who register to volunteer as a group, or businesses, local organisations and educational establishments wishing to provide volunteers for a one-off event need to have their own public liability insurance.

The Council asks all of our volunteers not to bring valuable items to their volunteering site. If you do, please be aware that you do so at your own risk.

6.3. Recognition

Witney Town Council believes that the commitment and performance of volunteers should be recognised as widely as possible. All volunteers are eligible to win the Witney Town Council Volunteering Award and may be directed to other organisations or schemes, where appropriate, for additional accreditation.

6.4. Volunteer Career Paths

All volunteers are encouraged to develop their personal skills to enhance their opportunities. The Department Volunteer Co-ordinator is available to signpost the volunteers to receive support for progression within their chosen field who can help with CV writing to help volunteers promote their skills.

Witney Town Council is also able to offer a reference to volunteers who have worked with the programme for a minimum of six months. This will be provided by the direct supervisor of the volunteer.

7. Volunteer Registration

- 7.1 If you would like to register with Witney Town Council Volunteering, please complete the attached forms. If there are no suitable positions vacant, we will keep your details on file and contact you when a suitable activity arises.

8. Privacy Statement

- 8.1 Witney Town Council is committed to ensuring that the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 1998 are met. Our Data Protection Policy is available to view at: [Witney Town Council Data Protection Policy](#)

Who we are and what we do?

Witney Town Council is the 'Controller' of any personal data that you provide to us. We collect, process, and store your personal data in relation to your application as a volunteer.

What we need to process your application?

You must supply personal data including your name, address and contact details.

Why we need it?

We use your personal and sensitive data to enable us to process your application. If you do not provide this information we cannot process your application.

What we do with it?

We will store your personal data in the Council's secure database, and it will be accessed by authorised Council employees only. We will use your data to enable us to check compliance with your application and contact you about volunteering matters. We may

share your personal data with enforcement authorities for the purposes of investigation and with emergency services if either is required.

How long we keep it?

If your application is not successful, we will keep your data for three months from the date of the final decision on your application. If you are successful, we will keep your data for the period you volunteer with the Council and a further six years.

What are your rights?

Please refer to the Council's data protection policy and privacy notice here:

[Witney Town Council Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice](#)

Alternatively, if you have any Data Protection queries you can email or contact the Council's Data Protection Officer via the details provided on our website <https://www.witney-tc.gov.uk/>



Appendix A

Witney Town Council Community Services

Volunteering Forms Pack

DRAFT

Adopted by: Policy, Governance & Finance Committee. Minute no:
Date: 9 June 2025 (tbc)
Review Date: 09 June 2026



Example Role Description

Welcomer Volunteer

Service or Programme:

Witney Volunteer Rangers, become part of the team managing and improving this fantastic resource.

Role Description:

Carry out practical conservation management all through the country park.

This can include,

Brash work

Bank stabilisation

Bird and bat box installation

Visitor surveys

Wildlife surveying

Location:

Witney lake and Country Park and other locations around the town

Time Commitment:

Volunteering with us is flexible you can do a session a week, fortnight, or a month, or two sessions a day.

Normal working hours are between 08:30 and 17:00 (Friday to 16:30), and you can join anytime within the workday.

Skills and Experience:

- A friendly, welcoming, people person
- No formal skills as all training will be provided.
- Confident in communicating with a whole range of people from different backgrounds.
- Enthusiastic and excited to learn about the looking after Witneys green heritage
- Punctual and reliable, they let us know if they cannot make it
- Aware of health and safety

Training

List any training that the volunteer will need to undertake mandatory or optional

Supervision

Biodiversity & Green Spaces Officer - Mobile: 07774 665340



Witney Town Council
Volunteer Role Description
(Role Name)

Service or Programme:

Give a brief overview of the role here, really try to sell it!

Role Description:

*Give details on what the volunteer will be doing, being specific about what actions they will take; who they will work with; use some descriptive words so they can picture it.
(Bullet points can make tasks easier to read)*

Location:

Where the volunteering will take place.

Time Commitment:

How much time per session/per week or time period? If there are specific session/opening times outline these.

Skills and Experience:

Broad or specific skills or knowledge; competencies; transferable skills the volunteer may need.

Training

List any training that the volunteer will need to undertake and if it is mandatory or optional.

Supervision

Who the volunteer will be reporting to (role will be adequate).

DBS check required?

Yes or No in this section if a DBS check will be required for this activity or not.



Volunteer Application Form

First Name:	Surname:
Home Address:	
Telephone No: (Day)	Telephone No: (Evening):
Email Address:	
Signed:	
I have read and agree with the Council's Volunteer Policy and Privacy Statement <input type="checkbox"/> Please tick	

We offer volunteering in the following areas. Please tick those that interest you.

Green Spaces	Nature reserves and parks upkeep	
Communities Team	Updating Notice Boards across the town	
Community Centres	Contributing to running the centres activities	

What would you like to achieve through your voluntary work at the organisation?

Do you have any support needs relevant to the volunteering? Please tell us what they are:

Relevant knowledge and skills:

Any other information relevant to the role:

Days/hours available:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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How did you hear about our volunteering opportunities?

References where required by the role

We may request references for particular volunteering roles.

Please supply the names and contacts of two referees who know you well in the boxes below. This may be a previous or current employer, neighbour, head teacher or a previous volunteering project. Please note that a referee cannot be a relative.

Name:	Your relationship to Referee:
Position:	Phone number:
Address:	Email:

Name:	Your relationship to Referee:
Position:	Phone number:
Address:	Email:

Is there any other relevant information you would like to tell us? If you have a health condition that is relevant to doing this volunteer role, please tell us, and we can make reasonable adjustments if necessary to ensure you can do it safely.



Emergency Contact: Please tell us who to contact in the event of an emergency

Name:	Phone Number home:
Relationship:	Mobile:
Address:	Email:

Do you need a visa to volunteer in the UK?

Are you:

- ☐ A non-EU national (Volunteer Centre for referral to a charity)
- ☐ A student, non EU national, with a visa restriction of the number of hours allowed for volunteering?

Please return the completed form to Witney Town Council Town Hall, Market Square
Witney, OX28 6AG



**Witney Town Council
Volunteer Reference form**

Volunteer role title:

Reference for:

Name of referee:

Address of referee:

Please tell us how long you have known this person:

In what capacity did you know them?

Please give us constructive comments on this person's suitability to volunteer with us:



Please tell us if there are any reasons why this person should not volunteer in this role.
Please phone to discuss this if you prefer. We treat information received in line with Data
Protection guidelines and processes:

Any other comments

Your signature:

Date:

Please return this form to the Council Officer who requested it, or to Ranger@witney-tc.gov.uk



Equal Opportunities Form

To monitor our effectiveness and to comply with the obligations placed on us under equalities legislation, we collect and analyse the following information.

All volunteers are requested to complete this form which will be used for monitoring purposes only and will be stored securely.

We don't need your name – the information we need is anonymous.

Equal opportunities monitoring form			
Witney Town Council is committed to promoting equality and social inclusion. Filling in this form will help us to know which groups need to be included more in our activities and volunteer recruitment campaigns.			
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Date of birth	__/__/__	Marital status	
Disability monitoring information – do you consider yourself to have a disability?			
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, please provide details	
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Ethnic monitoring information – our ethnic group describes how we think of ourselves			
Ethnic background is not necessarily the same as nationality or country of birth. Please tick which is closest to how you see yourself, or write a more specific group if you wish.			
Ethnic origin			
African <input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/>	British <input type="checkbox"/>	Caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>
Chinese <input type="checkbox"/>	Indian <input type="checkbox"/>	Irish <input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/>
White & Asian <input type="checkbox"/>	White & black African <input type="checkbox"/>	White & black caribbean <input type="checkbox"/>	Any other Asian background <input type="checkbox"/>
Any other mixed background <input type="checkbox"/>	Any other white background <input type="checkbox"/>	Any other black background <input type="checkbox"/>	Any other ethnic group <input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Orientation			
Bisexual <input type="checkbox"/>		Heterosexual <input type="checkbox"/>	
Gay man <input type="checkbox"/>		Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>	
Gay woman/lesbian <input type="checkbox"/>			

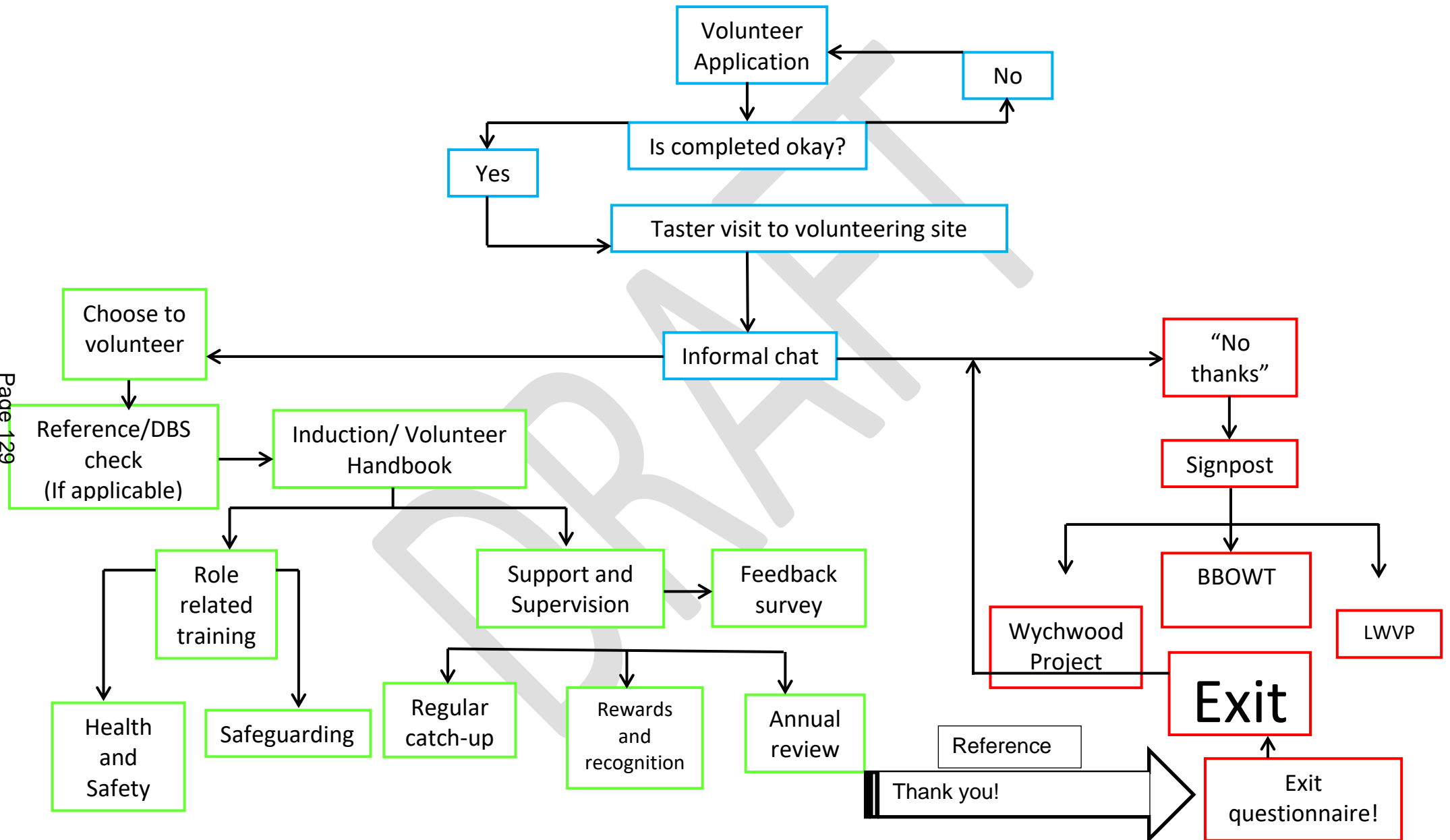


Religion/Belief			
Atheist/Humanist/no beliefs <input type="checkbox"/>	Buddhist <input type="checkbox"/>	Catholic <input type="checkbox"/>	Christian <input type="checkbox"/>
Hindu <input type="checkbox"/>	Jewish <input type="checkbox"/>	Muslim <input type="checkbox"/>	Sikh <input type="checkbox"/>
Other <input type="checkbox"/> (please specify if you wish)		Prefer not to say <input type="checkbox"/>	

Please return this form by email to info@witney-tc.gov.uk

Or by post by using the addressed envelope provided. You may also put it in a sealed envelope and hand it into our Reception on Market Square, opposite Barclays Bank.

Thank you.





Volunteer Induction Checklist

This list should be used when inducting a new volunteer with Witney Town Council. When the process is complete include it in the volunteer's personnel file. A copy should also be given to the volunteer.

The volunteer and supervisor must sign this form at the end of the induction session or role related training, as this will ensure the volunteer is covered by the Council's insurance. No activity can take place until the induction form is signed.

1. Volunteering Location/s

Tour of office/site introduction to key staff with organisational background

☐

Emergency Action Plan

☐

Introduction to other relevant staff/projects

☐

2. Witney Town Council policies

Health & Safety

☐

Confidentiality

☐

Environmental

☐

Equalities

☐

Volunteering

☐

3. Database (If Applicable)

Introduction to database (optional)

☐

Hard copy folders

☐

Introduction to and use of website

☐

4. Personal Development

Introduction to Volunteer Support

☐

Task Specific Training needs assessed

☐

Identify appropriate courses/access to training

☐

5. Task/role specific induction (to be completed by Volunteer Supervisor)

6. Personal

Risk Assessment (and reasonable adjustments)

☐



- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Days/periods of volunteering | <input type="radio"/> |
| If you are unable to attend your session | <input type="radio"/> |
| Expenses claims | <input type="radio"/> |
| Insurance | <input type="radio"/> |
| Volunteering while receiving benefits | <input type="radio"/> |
| Personal file | <input type="radio"/> |

Office Procedures Induction Checklist

This list is helpful for volunteers who will be based in one of the Witney Town Council offices and likely to make use of office facilities.

7. Premises

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| Kitchen | <input type="radio"/> |
| First aid and fire procedures | <input type="radio"/> |
| Information on building and other tenants | <input type="radio"/> |
| Toilets | <input type="radio"/> |
| Access/ID | <input type="radio"/> |

8. Office (if applicable to task)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Outlook diary | <input type="radio"/> |
| E-mail account | <input type="radio"/> |
| Photocopier | <input type="radio"/> |
| Fax | <input type="radio"/> |
| Franking machine | <input type="radio"/> |
| What kept where (stationery etc) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Filing cabinets | <input type="radio"/> |
| Telephone | <input type="radio"/> |
| Safety protocols | <input type="radio"/> |
| Phone/post (personal use) | <input type="radio"/> |

By signing this induction form you are agreeing to comply with the Volunteer Agreement.

Signed by volunteer

Signed by volunteer supervisor

Date: _____



(Induction continued)

Role Related Training Log

Date of Training	Name of Training	Volunteers Signature



Volunteer Agreement

We appreciate your commitment to us and will do the best we can to make your volunteer experience with us enjoyable and rewarding. Our volunteers are important to us and we value your commitment, contribution and support.

To make sure you have the best possible experience we have created this agreement which sets out our commitment to you and what we hope you can contribute.

This agreement is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be stopped at any time by either party.

What Witney Town Council offers its volunteers:

- A relaxed and friendly atmosphere
- An opportunity to meet like-minded and interesting people
- Opportunity to learn and develop new skills
- Opportunity to attend training sessions and talks
- Opportunities to discuss your ideas and suggestions
- A chance to gain role-related experience
- Take opportunities to enhance your CV
- A place to secure your belongings
- Refreshments and toilet facilities

We will ensure the following:

- All personal information provided to the staff will remain confidential
- All volunteers are covered by the Council's insurance and policies, relating to Health and Safety
- A written position description so you understand your role and the tasks you are authorised to perform
- A full induction, orientation and any training necessary for the volunteer role
- A safe environment in which to perform your role
- Respect for your privacy, including keeping your private information confidential.
- A supervisor, so that you have the opportunity to ask questions and get feedback.
- Reimbursement for any agreed reasonable expenses so you are not out-of-pocket as a result of volunteering for us.



What the Service hopes you will do as a volunteer:

- Support the Council's aims and objectives.
- Perform your role to the best of your ability.
- To treat information regarding the Council's finances, other volunteers and staff, in a confidential manner.
- To take part in as many of the offered training sessions as possible, particularly Health and Safety and knowledge of the activity on offer.
- To be polite and courteous demonstrating good customer care to everybody when representing the Council.
- Only undertake duties you are authorised to perform and always operate under the direction and supervision of nominated staff and obey reasonable directions and instructions.
- Notify your supervisor or another member of staff of any health and safety issues or potentially hazardous situations that may pose a risk to you or others and report any accidents or incidents relating to staff, volunteers, or the workplace.
- Use any property or equipment given to you in your role safely and only for purpose of the role and return it to the organisation when you finish your volunteer role.
- Let us know if you wish to change the nature of your contribution (e.g. hours, role) to the Town Council at any time.
- Be open and honest in your dealings with us and let us know if we can improve our volunteer program and the support that you receive.
- Be punctual.
- Call or email if you are unable to attend as arranged or if you are going to be late.
- To avoid actions which might reflect badly on Witney Town Council.
- To not accept gifts or other items on the Council's behalf.
- Inform immediately a member of staff of any problems or dangers, accidents, inappropriate or suspicious behaviour, violence or vandalism.
- Sign in and out when arriving and leaving the site for safety reasons.

Start date _____

You have indicated you will be available to volunteer for _____ hours per week on (circle relevant day/s).

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
--------	---------	-----------	----------	--------	----------	--------



Volunteer Log

Supervisors use this record for key milestones and exceptional events. File in the volunteer's folder. It will provide you with a summary of what stage they're at and any recent communication you've had with them. Depending on your process for getting volunteers started you may need to change the order.

Volunteer Name: _____

Step in Process	Date	Notes
Enquiry received		
Information Pack Sent		
Application Form Received		
Reference letter sent		
References received		
Informal Interview held		
Any agreed reasonable adjustments		
Disclosure check complete		
Induction completed and form signed by volunteer		
Start date		
Leaving date		

Log

Date	Notes



Volunteer Feedback Form

Witney Town Council is committed to continually improving the quality of what we offer, and this includes our volunteers. We are interested in how you are getting on in your role. Your honest feedback via this anonymous form will help us improve our support to you and other volunteers and acknowledge good practice by staff.

Thank you in advance for your comments.

Continue onto another piece of paper if you need to.

1. What team do you volunteer with?

2. How many hours per week do you volunteer on average?

3. How would you rate your overall volunteering experience, (1 = poor and 10 = excellent)?

1					5						10
---	--	--	--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	----

4. Tell us the best thing about your volunteering experience.



5. If you could change anything about your volunteering experience, what would it be and why?

6. Do you have any suggestions on how volunteering with the Witney Town Council could be improved i.e. support, training, management, communication, the role?

Please return this form to your supervisor; or email to info@witney-tc.gov.uk



Volunteer Exit Questionnaire

Witney Town Council is committed to continually improving the quality of the service offered to volunteers. We are interested in hearing about your experience as a volunteer with the service. Completing this anonymous form will help us to continue improving support to volunteers and to recognise and encourage good practice by staff.

Thank you in advance for your comments.

1. How long have you been volunteering with the Witney Town Council? (place an 'x' in the box)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	6 months or less
<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 6 months- 2 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 2 years – 5 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 5 years

2. What volunteer role(s) were you doing with the Witney Town Council?	
---	--

3. For which of these reasons are you leaving the Witney Town Council as a volunteer? (mark <u>all</u> that apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	My ill health
<input type="checkbox"/>	Caring responsibilities i.e. family, friends
<input type="checkbox"/>	I gained employment
<input type="checkbox"/>	I am going to volunteer with another organisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Changing home / work circumstances
<input type="checkbox"/>	I had a negative experience (please specify)
Other (please specify)	

	Definitely Agree	Tend to Agree	Tend to Disagree	Definitely Disagree
I met people and made friends through it				
I got satisfaction from seeing the results				
It gave me a sense of personal achievement				
It gave me a chance to do things I'm good at				
I really enjoyed sharing my skills/knowledge				
It helped me to build confidence in myself				
It gave me the chance to learn new skills				

Yes, definitely	Yes, I think so	No, I don't think so	No, definitely not
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Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
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Template

Volunteer Exit Reference

Witney Town Council

(Below structure of reference of Volunteer Supervisors - to be offered to those who have volunteers who have volunteered with community Services for over six months on completion of volunteering.)

_____ (volunteers name) has volunteered in Witney Town Council
with the _____ (team name) for _____ (duration of placement) (number of times a
week/month).

Date

(Officers name)

(Officers role)



Witney Town Council

Memorial Bench Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Witney Town Council understands the wishes of anyone wishing to install a memorial bench. These benches also form part of Witney Town Council's Street furniture and benefit all the residents of Witney.
- 1.2. The policy does not cover the application for memorial benches in Tower Hill and Windrush Cemetery.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to address the below three principles.
 - 2.1.1. To be respectful of those seeking to install a memorial bench.
 - 2.1.2. To ensure benches are maintained and kept functional.
 - 2.1.3. To keep benches in keeping within the areas they have been installed and benefit the wider community.

3. Review

- 3.1. The policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years.

4. Locations

- 4.1. Only suitable seating locations that benefit the wider community will be considered.
- 4.2. Only sites with space for additional benches will be considered. This is to avoid any site becoming overpopulated with street furniture including bike racks, bins, and picnic benches.
- 4.3. No one area can become overly populated with memorial benches to ensure that area does not become a memorial area. This is to avoid compromising the areas enjoyment for recreation purposes.

5. Bench Styles

- 5.1. Witney Town Council will only install Eastgate benches for memorial applications.
 - 5.1.1. The only exception to this is if an Eastgate Bench is not seen as in keeping within the area. In this instance, a suitable style bench will be identified by a council officer for installation.
- 5.2. All Eastgate Benches are manufactured with timber slats treated with clear or dark varnish.

- 5.2.1. The colour of the varnish selected will be based on the area of installation.
- 5.2.2. Recycled plastic slats are available for purchase but will only be supplied at an additional cost to the applicant. They will also need to be in keeping with the area of installation and other street furniture.
- 5.2.3. The council may adapt its standing on the purchase of recycled products, and this could include all-new benches to be installed with recycled plastic slats. In the case of this, the cost of recycled plastic slats will be included on all invoices and the choice of wooden slats will not be offered.
- 5.3. The cast iron ends of an Eastgate bench can be supplied in different colours and applicants are asked on the application form to identify if they want a specific colour that is not the standard Jet Black. Witney Town council will advise applicants if the colour is suitable.
- 5.4. The colour must be in keeping with the area, closely situated street furniture, play equipment and buildings.

6. Bespoke designs

- 6.1. In exceptional cases, it will be decided by the council if a bespoke design bench will be installed.
- 6.2. A case would have to be made by an applicant that an officer will take to the council for approval.
- 6.3. All other areas of this policy would still be applicable. If a location is not identified and agreed upon by an officer in line with this policy, then any application for a bespoke design will be rejected.
- 6.4. If it is agreed that a bespoke design bench is installed, then the council will not include this bench in its street furniture stock, and it will only receive basic maintenance typically limited to cleaning.
- 6.5. For all maintenance issues, the original applicant will be contacted to cover the cost of maintenance.
- 6.6. If a bespoke bench has significant health and safety risks and the applicant is unwilling to cover the cost, it will then be removed.

7. Installation

- 7.1. Benches will be installed on a concrete pad or grassed, in areas of low wear. Typically, benches will be installed by the same process as all other benches in one area.

8. Maintenance

- 8.1. Once a bench has been installed it will be included in Witney Town Council Street furniture stock and be maintained by the council.
- 8.2. Periodic maintenance will fall in line with all other benches and extra maintenance will not be supplied for memorial benches.
- 8.3. Benches are periodically refurbished which includes repairing/replacing broken slats, weather treating and re-painting the cast iron ends.
- 8.4. While a memorial bench is being refurbished, no bench will be installed in its place.
- 8.5. If a bench end has been painted in anything other than jet black, then there is no guarantee that the same colour will be re-applied. Witney town council will endeavour to colour match the original colour as best as possible.
- 8.6. Plaques will be cleaned and polished when a bench is being refurbished.
- 8.7. If the bench has graffiti or excessive bird guano over it will be sanded or jet washed down in its current location.

9. Memorial Plaque

- 9.1. Plaques can be no larger than 20cm x 4cm, this fits onto one timber slat.
- 9.2. All plaques are installed on the second from the top slat in the centre.
- 9.3. All text has to be contained within one plaque
- 9.4. Memorial plaques can be supplied in different materials, listed below. The material can be selected on the application form.
 - 9.4.1. Bronze
 - 9.4.2. Aluminium
 - 9.4.3. Stainless Steel
- 9.5. There may be the case when an applicant who purchases a bench wishes to install an additional plaque or replace the installed plaque with a new one.
 - 9.5.1. In the case of a replacement plaque, an officer would have to agree on any new wording, and it will be ordered and installed. The applicant will be invoiced accordingly including all resources required.
 - 9.5.1.1. Only the original applicant or, in the case of the applicant passing away, a first-degree relative can make such a request.
 - 9.5.1.2. The old plaque can be returned or disposed of.
 - 9.5.2. Additional plaques are not permitted to avoid a memorial bench becoming too cluttered and too personal, affecting the enjoyment of the area by other users.

10. Removal and Future Ownership

- 10.1. If the case arises that a memorial bench has to be removed it will be stored complete with plaque until a new location can be identified for its reinstallation.
 - 10.1.1. This includes the relocation based on a high level of complaints related to one bench. This could be that a bench location has brought anti-social behaviour to the area. Council officers will include this in the thought process of any bench location, but it cannot be completely avoided.
- 10.2. All efforts will be made to work with the original applicant to find a suitable new location.
- 10.3. Applicants must understand that officers will identify a new location in line with this policy so it may be the case that only one new location can be offered of which an applicant can accept or reject.
- 10.4. If rejected the bench will be installed in the new location without a memorial plaque. If a plaque is lost, stolen or damaged the council will not be liable for the cost of a replacement.
 - 10.4.1. The original applicant will be contacted to arrange the replacement of the plaque.
 - 10.4.2. If no contact can be made or no response received the bench will be returned into Witney Town Council standard street furniture stock after six months have passed since the initial contact.
 - 10.4.3. This could involve the future removal of the bench and a new memorial bench installed in the area.

11. Procedure for Application and Installation

- 11.1. Anyone wishing to make an application can source an application form online or at the Witney Town Council offices.
- 11.2. The application form must then be submitted via email to facilities@witney-tc.gov.uk or via post to Witney Town Council, 51b Market Square, Witney OX28 6AG.

- 11.3. The applicant will be advised if their application has been accepted or rejected. If rejected, this will normally be due to the location and/or the number of memorial items at the desired site.
- 11.4. If accepted we will agree with the applicant the final position of the memorial bench, colour, and memorial plaque detail.
- 11.5. The applicant is then invoiced for payment which includes the bench, plaque, work hours and materials required to install.
- 11.6. Only once Witney Town Council have received payment in full will the bench and plaque be ordered and the concrete base will be prepared if needed.
- 11.7. The applicant will be advised of the proposed install date. Please note delivery of benches from our supplier can take up to 10 weeks.
- 11.8. The location of memorial benches along with details will be stored on Witney Town Council Mapping Software.
- 12. Witney Town Council is committed to ensuring the security and protection of the personal information that we process, and to provide a compliant and consistent approach to data protection. The Town Council's Privacy Statement can be found here: www.witney-tc.gov.uk/privacy-policy/

Adopted by:

Date:

Minute Number:

Next Review Date: June 2028

POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE



Agenda Item:	Payment of Accounts
Meeting Date:	Monday 9 June 2025
Contact Officer:	Responsible Financial Officer

Background

Members should note from previous reports that the Council has its bank accounts with Barclays Bank and runs three active accounts: the General Account, the Imprest Account and the Business Premium Account. Transfers between accounts take place but external payments are only made from the General Account and the Imprest Account.

Cheque payments over £5,000 and Electronic Payments are made from the General Account. Cheque payments of less than £5,000 are made from the Imprest Account.

The payment schedules, bank statements and bank reconciliations are brought to the Policy, Governance & Finance committee as part of the Council's due diligence procedures.

Current Situation

1. Bank Reconciliation and Bank Statements

Attached are bank reconciliations and associated bank statements for February and March 2025.

2. Payment of Accounts

Attached are the payment schedules for February and March 2025.

It was previously reported that the Council's general account (cashbook 1) had been subject to a number of unauthorised direct debits from August 2024. The matter has been addressed with the bank and refunds were made but an amount of £61.84 remains owed to the Council and this is being addressed with the bank.

Since the last meeting your offices have cancelled more unauthorised direct debits before any money was taken from the general account.

The situation will continue to be monitored.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and bank reconciliations and that the following schedule of payments be approved:

Payment reference/ Cheque Numbers	In the sum of:	Account
Cheque 101277, DDs, ELPs 14 to 29 (electronic payments) and Standing Orders February 2025	£204,277.60	General CB 1
Cheques 35116-35119; DDs, BACs and Standing Orders February 2025	£16,883.13	Imprest CB 2
DDs, ELPs 30 to 41 and Standing Orders March 2025	£153,723.16	General CB 1
Cheques 35120-35158, cancelled cheques 34935 & 35115, DDs and Standing Orders March 2025	£28,302.47	Imprest CB 2

Report ends.

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL 2024-25

BARCLAYS GENERAL A/C

List of Payments made between 01/02/2025 and 28/02/2025

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
03/02/2025	BARCLAYS BANK	DD	£40.00	BARCLAYS BANK CHARGES
05/02/2025	Restore Datashred	DD1	£86.82	22667/confidential/paper waste
05/02/2025	Brake Bros Limited	EP14-1	£1,688.29	22359/Café supplies
05/02/2025	Castle Water Ltd - Town Hall O	ET14-2	£37.90	22363/december 2024
05/02/2025	Castle Water Ltd - Leys Splash	ET-14-3	£199.96	22616/January 2025
05/02/2025	Castle Water Ltd - Leys Pavili	ET14-4	£813.54	22367/apr-nov 24 adjustment
05/02/2025	The HR & OD Consultancy Ltd	EP14-5	£2,292.00	22427/HR Support
05/02/2025	Triump Technologies Ltd (NOW R	EP14-6	£1,711.04	22382/monthly IT support
05/02/2025	Trade UK	EP14-7	£234.04	22392/works supplies
05/02/2025	SSE Energy Solutions	EP14-8	£231.70	22400/floodlights & memorial
05/02/2025	Town & Country Trees Limited	EP14-9	£4,620.00	22406/tree surveys
05/02/2025	Workwear Express Ltd	EP14-10	£709.61	22417/PPE/works clothing
05/02/2025	West Witney Bowls Club	EP14-11	£1,700.00	22318/facilities rent 8/12-8/1
05/02/2025	Nisbets	EP14-12	£1,343.95	22453/folding tables & chairs
05/02/2025	OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	EP15	£22,435.28	LGPS/JANUARY 2025
07/02/2025	Surrey Hills Solicitors	ELP16/1	£4,740.00	Legal advice
10/02/2025	BARCLAYCARD	DD	£40.40	BARCLAYCARD - FEES
10/02/2025	BARCLAYCARD	DD	£76.44	BARCLAYCARD FEES
	WEST OXFORDSHIRE COMMUNITY			
10/02/2025	TRANSPORT	EP16-A	£3,500.00	GRANT - JAN.& FEB. 2025
10/02/2025	Fuel Card Services Ltd	DD	£108.07	22657/unleaded fuel
10/02/2025	Pest Solutions Oxfordshire	EP18-1	£60.00	22379/monthly pest control
10/02/2025	Amenity Horticultural Services	EP17-1	£2,016.00	22336/horticultural supplies
10/02/2025	Badgemaster Limited	EP17-2	£80.46	22344/photo ID & holders
10/02/2025	Adam Blizzard	EP17-3	£90.00	22347/door security 30/11

10/02/2025	Devon County Council	EP17-5	£60.00	22372/DBS checks
10/02/2025	Huck Nets	EP17-6	£33.79	22374/plastic post caps
10/02/2025	Pear Technology Services Ltd	EP17-7	£51.00	22378/contour mapping
10/02/2025	Water Garden Limited	EP17-8	£120.00	22413/chemical test kits/Lake & CP
10/02/2025	Lan Services Ltd t/aCommercial	ELP17/4	£984.00	3 No. hand dryers
17/02/2025	Ustigate Ltd	101277	£41,399.78	22677/Splashpark20% deposit
17/02/2025	Fuel Card Services Ltd	DD1	£45.92	22912/Can-Am 06.02.25
17/02/2025	Castle Water Ltd - Tower Hill	DD2	£101.73	22906/january 2025
17/02/2025	Sage UK	DD3	£226.80	22969/payroll & HR support
19/02/2025	Attack Envirnmental Ltd	EP19-1	£362.40	22444/monthly sanitary bin service
19/02/2025	Brewers Decorator Centres	EP19-2	£131.47	22360/paint & fungicidal wash
19/02/2025	Owen Collins	ELP-20/1	£200.00	22751/expenses
21/02/2025	Mrs Sharon Groth	EP24-1	£113.20	22632/Fasthosts & Wordfence licences
				22610/ tree planting volunteer
21/02/2025	Polly Inness	EP22-2	£31.60	refreshments
21/02/2025	Angus Whitburn	EP22-5	£80.82	22604/fridge fan & mirror
21/02/2025	Thomas Davies	EP22-8	£37.00	22611/WODC personal licence
21/02/2025	West Oxfordshire District Coun	EP25-1	£780.00	Commercial waste collection
21/02/2025	Brake Bros Limited	EP21-1	£999.66	22553/cafe supplies
21/02/2025	Castle Water Ltd - Town Hall O	EP23-2	£37.54	22615/january 2025
21/02/2025	Castle Water Ltd - Leys Splash	EP23-1	£415.04	22616/January 2025
21/02/2025	Drax Energy Solutions Limited	EP23-4	£114.95	22620/January 2025
21/02/2025	Copy Right Systems Ltd	EP23-5	£110.59	22564/printer cost
21/02/2025	Safelincs Ltd	EP23-6	£353.58	22565/defib.battery and pads
21/02/2025	Filmbankmedia	EP23-7	£208.80	22568/cinema film licences
21/02/2025	House and Carriage Ltd	EP23-8	£74.29	22621/monthly storage fee
21/02/2025	Lyd's Bakes and Cakes	EP23-9	£930.75	22576/café supplies
21/02/2025	Trade UK	EP23-10	£88.66	22584/hose repair connector
21/02/2025	Workwear Express Ltd	EP23-11	£93.60	22605/works clothing

21/02/2025	The HR & OD Consultancy Ltd	EP23-12	£1,557.60	22622/monthly consultancy 22628/gravel & resin (Windrush cemetery)
21/02/2025	GCL Products Limited	EP23-13	£506.26	Water rates
21/02/2025	Castle Water Ltd - Leys Pavili	EP23-3	£209.13	22913/Can-Am 11.02.25
24/02/2025	Fuel Card Services Ltd	DD5	£41.57	HMRC - JANUARY 2025
25/02/2025	HMRC - JANUARY 2025	DD	£21,260.65	SALARIES & WAGES
25/02/2025	SALARIES & WAGES	BACS	£69,191.68	22669/rental & service fee
28/02/2025	Siemens Financial Services Ltd	DD	£718.92	22600/NPTC assessment/spraying
28/02/2025	Vale Training Services Ltd	EP-28	£2,500.00	22614/Boiler works
28/02/2025	Aspect Plumbing & Heating (Wit	EP28-1	£180.00	22554/gift cards "Wild Witney"
28/02/2025	BGC South Limited	EP28-2	£45.00	prizes
28/02/2025	C J Clarke (Timber Merchants)	EP28-3	£46.80	22558/post crete
28/02/2025	Greenway Training Limited	EP28-4	£324.00	22609/winching course fee
28/02/2025	Hussey Seatway Ltd	EP28-5	£716.40	22574/seating annual service
28/02/2025	South East Employers	EP28-6	£432.00	22588/Council chairing skills
28/02/2025	Starlite	EP28-7	£382.34	22591/Can-Am service
28/02/2025	Tudor Environmental	EP28-8	£472.14	22593/lifebuoy cabinet & post
28/02/2025	Absolute Climate Solutions Ltd	EP29-1	£1,230.00	22613/air-conditioning work
28/02/2025	We Print Gifts Ltd	EP29-2	£79.46	22675/lanyards & holders
28/02/2025	West Witney Bowls Club	EP29-3	£1,700.00	22678/rental 08.01.25-08.02.25
28/02/2025	Breakthrough Communications &	EP26-1	£1,668.00	22633/additional training
28/02/2025	Chew Valley Trees Ltd	EP26-2	£1,493.21	22557/snipe med orchard trees
28/02/2025	National Association of Local Councils	EP26-3	£52.04	22634/empowering youth course
28/02/2025	Cleansing Service Group Ltd	EP26-4	£201.00	22559/sludge disposal
28/02/2025	Centennial Safety group Ltd	EP26-5	£1,200.00	22556/fire risk assessments
28/02/2025	Castle Water Ltd - Corn Exchan	DD6	£1,026.93	22904/january 2025
			<u>£204,277.60</u>	

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 28/02/2025
for Cashbook 1 - BARCLAYS GENERAL A/C























<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
BARCLAYS GENERAL A/C	28/02/2025		106,058.65
			<u>106,058.65</u>
<u>Unpresented Payments (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
17/02/2025 101277 Ustigate Ltd		41,399.78	
			<u>41,399.78</u>
			64,658.87
<u>Unpresented Receipts (Plus)</u>			
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			64,658.87
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	64,658.87
		Difference is :-	0.00

Signatory 1:

NameSignedDate

Signatory 2:

NameSignedDate

Date	Description	Money out £	Money in £	Balance £
Balance brought forward from previous page				97,718.23
28 Feb	 Direct Credit From BCard1577926260225		90.05	97,808.28
	 Direct Credit From Ostma Ref: Harrison Toogood		114.75	97,923.03
	 Direct Credit From The Little L Ref: Inv B5787		157.00	98,080.03
	 Direct Credit From C Codd Ref: B5802		159.00	98,239.03
	 Direct Credit From Deer Park Rangers Ref: B5780		172.50	98,411.53
	 Direct Credit From The Arts Society W Ref: Inv B5805		296.00	98,707.53
	 Direct Credit From Epos Now (UK) Ltd Ref: Swpe423C92232V6B5M		517.59	99,225.12
	 Direct Credit From Thames (D/D) Ref: TW5997278328		1,026.93	100,252.05
	 Direct Credit From Peter Smith & Son Ref: Smithp		4,055.00	104,307.05
	 Direct Credit From Eventbrite Operati Ref: 1130844669849		420.00	104,727.05
	 Deposit Re 45Witney 101428		1,331.60	106,058.65
3 Mar	 Direct Debit to Fuel Card Services Ref: Shb303621	42.64		106,016.01
	 Standing Order From Lily's Attic Ltd Ref:- Rent		1,662.50	107,678.51
	 Direct Credit From Friends of West OX Ref: B5800 T Farley		81.50	107,760.01
	 Direct Credit From Work Account Ref: Moncrieff B5791		178.00	107,938.01
	 Direct Credit From BCard1577926270225		233.50	108,171.51
	 Direct Credit From Turner Jessica Ref: Jessica Turner		287.23	108,458.74
	 Direct Credit From Epos Now (UK) Ltd Ref: Swpe423CF223325F5M		425.38	108,884.12
	 Direct Credit From Epos Now (UK) Ltd Ref: Swpe423C8223392K5M		1,053.37	109,937.49
	 Direct Credit From Dignity Funerals Ref: 008932		158.50	110,095.99
4 Mar	 Direct Credit From Turner Keith Ref: D Harris Erob 3548		0.50	110,096.49
	 Direct Credit From Turner Keith Ref: D Harris Erob 3548		42.00	110,138.49

Continued

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL 2024-25

BARCLAYS GENERAL A/C

List of Payments made between 01/03/2025 and 31/03/2025

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
03/03/2025	Fuel Card Services Ltd	DD1	£42.64	22914/Can-Am 17.02.25
05/03/2025	Restore Datashred	DD2	£86.82	22968/confidential/paper waste
05/03/2025	Surrey Hills Solicitors	ELP-30	£4,575.29	Legal fees
06/03/2025	BARCLAYS BANK	DD	£8.62	BARCLAYS BANK charges
07/03/2025	BARCLAYS BANK PLC	DD	£86.66	CHARGES 13JAN TO 12FEB 25
10/03/2025	Fuel Card Services Ltd	DD3	£70.48	22958/unleaded fuel
10/03/2025	Angus Whitburn	ELP-31-1	£152.98	22686/vehicle maintenance; & tiles
10/03/2025	Derek Mackenzie	ELP-31-2	£99.23	22683/red carpet for events inc C/Ex.
10/03/2025	Nigel Warner	ELP-31-3	£703.35	22749/debtor expenses & credit checks
10/03/2025	BARCLAYCARD	DD	£40.40	BARCLAYCARD CHARGES
10/03/2025	WEST OXON COMMUNITY TRANSPORT	STD ORD	£1,750.00	WOCT - GRANT
10/03/2025	BARCLAYCARD	DD	£57.76	BARCLAYCARD CHARGES
11/03/2025	Attack Environmental Ltd	ELP-32-1	£362.40	22682/monthly sanitary bin service
11/03/2025	Town Mayor's Fundraising Accou	ELP-32-2	£40.00	22606/Deputy mayor expenses
11/03/2025	Greenway Training Limited	ELP-32-3	£1,134.00	22608/chainsaw course
11/03/2025	House and Carriage Ltd	ELP-32-4	£74.29	22696/monthly storage fee
11/03/2025	Kemp Hall Bindery	ELP-32-5	£640.00	22745/minute books bound
11/03/2025	Office Furniture Online	ELP-32-6	£340.80	22698/chair and table
11/03/2025	Pest Solutions Oxfordshire	ELP-32-7	£60.00	22684/monthly pest control
11/03/2025	SSE Energy Solutions	ELP-32-8	£231.70	22685/01.01.25 - 31.01.25
11/03/2025	Les Steward	ELP-32-9	£180.00	22679/stocktake 23.01.25
11/03/2025	R G H Supplies Limited	ELP-32-10	£75.98	22697/fencing staples
12/03/2025	Community First Oxfordshire	ELP-33-1	£85.00	22752/membership 4.25-3.26
12/03/2025	Office Furniture Online	ELP-33-3	£637.20	22748/chairs and desk
12/03/2025	SSE	ELP-33-4	£2,170.74	22747/ Christmas light electric 2021-2024

12/03/2025	DWP DEBT MANAGEMENT	BACS	£266.38	DIRECT EARNINGS ATTACHMENT
17/03/2025	OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL	BACS	£22,360.76	PENSION FEBRUARY 2025
17/03/2025	(Payee redacted)	ELP-34-2	£2,476.75	SALARY FINAL
17/03/2025	Fuel Card Services Ltd	DD	£39.37	23148/06.03.25 Can-Am
17/03/2025	Castle Water Ltd - Tower Hill	DD1	£91.18	23143/01.02.25 - 28.02.25
17/03/2025	Sage UK	DD2	£226.80	23163/payroll & HR support
21/03/2025	Amenity Horticultural Services	ELP-35-1	£193.80	22753/weed membrane
21/03/2025	Adam Blizzard	ELP-35-2	£180.00	22759/security - Elton & Disco
21/03/2025	Aspect Plumbing & Heating (Wit	ELP-35-3	£1,797.60	22760/install cold water tank
21/03/2025	Copy Right Systems Ltd	ELP-35-5	£97.13	22769/printing cost
21/03/2025	Devon County Council	ELP-35-6	£33.50	22770/DBS fee
21/03/2025	Drax Energy Solutions Limited	ELP-35-7	£104.45	22790/01.02.25 - 28.02.25
21/03/2025	First Fence Ltd	ELP-35-8	£168.50	22771/posts, bolts & clips
21/03/2025	The HR & OD Consultancy Ltd	ELP-38-1	£1,557.60	22792/monthly consultancy
21/03/2025	National Association of Memori	ELP-36-1	£1,712.40	22775/C&G SIAM assessment
21/03/2025	Pear Technology Services Ltd	ELP-36-2	£258.00	22776/PT mapper support 25/26
21/03/2025	Pest Solutions Oxfordshire	ELP-36-3	£180.00	22777/church green pest visits
21/03/2025	Trade UK	ELP-36-4	£177.46	22783/works team supplies
21/03/2025	Tudor Environmental	ELP-36-5	£239.77	22785/works team supplies
21/03/2025	Vatix	ELP-36-6	£1,231.20	22786/lone working devices
21/03/2025	Workwear Express Ltd	ELP-36-7	£372.06	22789/protective/works clothing
21/03/2025	Auditing Solutions Ltd	ELP-37-1	£612.00	22754/2nd interim audit 24/25
21/03/2025	Mayor of Thame's Charity Trust	ELP-37-2	£55.00	22774/charity event 5th April
21/03/2025	Brady Corporation Ltd	ELP-37-3	£353.00	22784/works supplies
21/03/2025	UK Point of Sale Group Ltd	ELP-37-4	£150.43	22791/chalk A board
21/03/2025	Witney & District Museum	ELP-39-1	£500.00	22787/annual grant 2024-25
21/03/2025	Brake Bros Limited	ELP35-4	£1,716.57	22768/cafe supplies
24/03/2025	Fuel Card Services Ltd	D/CR	£85.36	23149/unleaded fuel
25/03/2025	HMRC	BACS	£21,329.00	TAX/NICS FEBRUARY 2025

25/03/2025	EMPLOYEE SALARIES	ELP- SALARIES	£67,568.93	SALARIES - MARCH 2025 (NET)
25/03/2025	Castle Water Ltd - Corn Exchan	DD3	£961.22	23141/01.02.25 - 28.02.25
27/03/2025	INFORMATION COMMISSIONERS	DD	£73.00	ICO REGISTRATION 2025-26
31/03/2025	Fuel Card Services Ltd	DD4	£130.54	23150/unleaded fuel
31/03/2025	WITNEY TOWN HALL CHARITY	STD ORD	£3,437.50	WITNEY TOWN HALL CHARITY RENT
31/03/2025	Mrs Sharon Groth	ELP-40	£56.27	22800/fasthosts & stationery
31/03/2025	Polly Inness	ELP-2	£80.96	22802/civic reception expenditure
31/03/2025	Adam Clapton	ELP 40-3	£71.97	22841/ethernet adapters & router
31/03/2025	Angus Whitburn	ELP-40/5	£54.90	22808/door knobs for Corn Ex.
31/03/2025	Loraine Harwood	ELP-40/6	£14.42	22801/Civic expenses
31/03/2025	Derek Mackenzie	ELP-40/7	£271.70	22804/Civic reception
31/03/2025	Thomas Davies	ELP-40-8	£47.99	22876/bands fo chairs
31/03/2025	Carl Whitehead	ELP-40-9	£99.74	22817/battery for Can-Am
31/03/2025	Castle Water Ltd - Town Hall O	ELP-41-2	£28.08	22793/01.02.25 - 28.02.25
31/03/2025	Castle Water Ltd - Leys Pavili	ELP-41/1	£131.77	22892/1.12.24-31.1.25 revised
31/03/2025	Filmbankmedia	ELP-41/3	£313.20	22798/cinema/film licences
31/03/2025	Lyd's Bakes and Cakes	ELP-41/4	£899.78	22803/Café supplies
31/03/2025	Oxfordshire Association of Loc	ELP-41/5	£60.00	22805/agendas & minutes course
31/03/2025	Pest Solutions Oxfordshire	ELP-41/6	£60.00	22807/monthly pest control
31/03/2025	Home Start Oxford	ELP40/7	£7,000.00	22816/2nd & 3rd instalment
31/03/2025	Glasdon UK Ltd	ELP41-8	£88.78	22815/works supplies
			<u>£153,723.16</u>	

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/03/2025
for Cashbook 1 - BARCLAYS GENERAL A/C

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
BARCLAYS GENERAL A/C	31/03/2025		34,621.23
			<u>34,621.23</u>
<u>Unpresented Payments (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			34,621.23
<u>Unpresented Receipts (Plus)</u>			
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			34,621.23
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	34,621.23
		Difference is :-	0.00
























Signatory 1:

NameSignedDate

Signatory 2:

NameSignedDate

Appendix

Date	Description	Money out £	Money in £	Balance
	Balance brought forward from previous page			25,351.09
31 Mar	 Payment to BX25032737724719 Ref: EP-40	697.95		24,653.14
	 Payment to BX25032837812397 Ref: Elp-41	8,581.61		16,071.53
	 Standing Order From Inclusive Care and Ref:- Rent		7,793.82	23,865.35
	 Direct Credit From Witney Branch Labo Ref: B5832		44.50	23,909.85
	 Direct Credit From Work Account Ref: Moncrieff B5835		133.50	24,043.35
	 Direct Credit From The Arts Society W Ref: Inv B5850		157.00	24,200.35
	 Direct Credit From Ostma Ref: Harrison Toogood		182.75	24,383.10
	 Direct Credit From Witney Royal Ref: W Royals B5228		206.66	24,589.76
	 Direct Credit From C Codd Ref: B5848		212.00	24,801.76
	 Direct Credit From Witney Royal Ref: W Royals B5453		288.74	25,090.50
	 Direct Credit From FC Mills Ref: FC Mills-Inv B5827		325.00	25,415.50
	 Direct Credit From Witney Royal Ref: W Royals B5840		387.50	25,803.00
	 Direct Credit From Amanda Paton T/A D Ref: Dancemania B5823		508.50	26,311.50
	 Direct Credit From Epos Now (UK) Ltd Ref: Swpe423C82232X3Q5M		876.60	27,188.10
	 Direct Credit From Epos Now (UK) Ltd Ref: Swpe423CD2232Phv5M		896.41	28,084.51
	 Direct Credit From Peter Smith & Son Ref: Smithp		3,910.50	31,995.01
	 Direct Credit From West OX Payments Ref: 0		958.92	32,953.93
	 Deposit Re 26Witney 101433		1,046.30	34,000.23
	 Direct Credit From Mynt Image Ltd F Ref: Invoice B5836 Mynt		621.00	34,621.23
1 Apr	 Direct Debit to Wod Ndr DD Ref: 03 90170575	1,022.50		33,598.73
	 Direct Debit to Wod Ndr DD Ref: 30421105	211.68		33,387.05
	 Direct Debit to Wod Ndr DD Ref: 30623704	381.40		33,005.65
	 Direct Debit to Wod Ndr DD Ref: 30685600	320.55		32,685.10

Continued

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL 2024-25

BARCLAYS IMPREST A/C

List of Payments made between 01/02/2025 and 28/02/2025

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
03/02/2025	BARCLAYS BANK PLC	DD	£30.62	IMP.A/C CRGS 13DEC24 TO 3FEB25
06/02/2025	Watson Fuels	DD	£1,175.76	22672/diesel
15/02/2025	BNP Paribas Leasing Solutions	Std Ord	£556.58	HP Grillo Mower
17/02/2025	Green Energy (UK) Plc	DD1	£8,385.43	22967/Gas and electricity 1557819 January 25
19/02/2025	BNP Paribas Leasing Solutions	Std Ord	£360.70	Trimax Mower HP
24/02/2025	Biffa Waste Services Limited	DD1	£1,143.89	22637/waste and recycling
24/02/2025	Watson Fuels	DD2	£440.22	22673/253 diesel
26/02/2025	Ue Coffee Roasters Ltd	35116	£917.90	22594/cafe supplies
26/02/2025	Ue Coffee Roasters Ltd	35117	£958.85	22599/cafe supplies
26/02/2025	Ue Coffee Roasters Ltd	35118	£760.50	22597/cafe supplies
26/02/2025	Ue Coffee Roasters Ltd	35119	£328.50	22598/cafe supplies
26/02/2025	Epos Now Ltd	DD2	£22.80	22907/payments pro
26/02/2025	Epos Now Ltd	DD3	£16.80	22910/protect now care plan
26/02/2025	Epos Now Ltd	DD4	£51.60	22908/protect / payments pro
26/02/2025	Epos Now Ltd	DD6	£60.00	22909/standard support licence
28/02/2025	STL Communications Ltd T/A Focus	DD7	£1,672.98	22973/telephone/ internet charges
			<u>£16,883.13</u>	

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 28/02/2025
for Cashbook 2 - BARCLAYS IMPREST A/C

Bank Statement Account Name (s)	Statement Date	Page No	Balances
BARCLAYS IMPREST A/C	28/02/2025		1,000.00
			1,000.00
Unpresented Payments (Minus)		Amount	
26/09/2024	34935	Mark Howard	100.00
31/10/2024	34988	Witney Fairtrade Action Group	32.00
13/12/2024	35064	Junior Parkrun	50.00
13/12/2024	35069	Rachel Morgan	150.00
13/12/2024	35080	Tower Hill Football Club	50.00
13/12/2024	35084	Witney & District Twinning Ass	50.00
31/01/2025	35110	Seldram Supplies Oxford Ltd	687.55
31/01/2025	35111	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	72.00
31/01/2025	35115	WGS Power & Lighting Ltd	960.00
			2,151.55
			-1,151.55
Unpresented Receipts (Plus)			
		0.00	
			0.00
			-1,151.55
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	-1,151.55
		Difference is :-	0.00

Signatory 1:

NameSignedDate

Signatory 2:

NameSignedDate

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL
MARKET SQUARE
WITNEY
OXFORDSHIRE
OX28 6AG

Your Business Current Account

At a glance

26 Feb - 04 Mar 2025

Date	Description	Money out £	Money in £	Balance £
26 Feb	Start Balance			1,000.00
	DD Direct Debit to Gocardless Ref: Eposnowltd-Pyjfms	22.80		977.20
	Giro Transfer From Account 70974641		22.80	1,000.00
27 Feb	DD Direct Debit to Gocardless Ref: Eposnowltd-7YV2Xgh	16.80		983.20
	DD Direct Debit to Gocardless Ref: Eposnowltd-7YV2Xgh	51.60		931.60
	DD Direct Debit to Gocardless Ref: Eposnowltd-7YV2Xgh	60.00		871.60
	Giro Transfer From Account 70974641		128.40	1,000.00
28 Feb	DD Direct Debit to Stl Communications Ref: 0319-383	1,672.98		-672.98
	Cheque Issued Ref: 035116	917.90		-1,590.88
	Cheque Issued Ref: 035117	958.85		-2,549.73
	Cheque Issued Ref: 035118	760.50		-3,310.23
	Cheque Issued Ref: 035119	328.50		-3,638.73
	Giro Transfer From Account 70974641		4,638.73	1,000.00
3 Mar	DD Direct Debit to Sse Energy Supply Ref: 0085171-DD00903544	33.35		966.65
	Giro Transfer From Account 70974641		33.35	1,000.00
4 Mar	Cheque Issued Ref: 035111	72.00		928.00

Continued

Start balance	£1,000.00
Money out	£4,895.28
Commission charges	£0.00
Interest paid	£0.00
Money in	£4,895.28
End balance	£1,000.00

Your deposit is eligible for protection
by the Financial Services
Compensation Scheme.

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL 2024-25

BARCLAYS IMPREST A/C

List of Payments made between 01/03/2025 and 31/03/2025

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
03/03/2025	SSE Energy Solutions	DD	£33.35	22971/lighting & buttercross
06/03/2025	4th Witney Rainbows	35120	£50.00	22631/4th Witney Rainbows grant
06/03/2025	2120 Witney Sqn ATC Welfare Fu	35121	£50.00	22626/Witney RAF Cadets grant
06/03/2025	AA Pat Testing Ltd	35122	£400.37	22630/Pat testing
06/03/2025	Amazon Payments UK Ltd	35123	£171.66	22548/misc.supplies
06/03/2025	ARCH	35124	£50.00	22629/Assisted Reading (ARCH) grant
06/03/2025	Barlow and Sons (Hermitage) Li	35125	£566.16	22549/timber for shoring
06/03/2025	George Browns Ltd	35126	£1,678.49	22572/misc.equipment & vehicle related
06/03/2025	C & C Tyre & Exhaust Services	35127	£116.40	22555/new tyre for EJ17YNK
06/03/2025	Cotteswold Dairy Ltd (Cheltenham)	35128	£382.70	22563/milk deliveries
06/03/2025	Eynsham Cellars	35129	£188.78	22607/cafe supplies - alcohol
06/03/2025	Friends of Witney Community Support	35130	£50.00	22623/50 for 50 grant
06/03/2025	GS Window Cleaning	35131	£272.00	22674/window cleaning
06/03/2025	KJ's Motor Car Engineers Ltd	35132	£197.94	22575/battery for OY62UXC
06/03/2025	M & M Skip Hire Limited	35133	£814.32	22579/waste disposal - skips
06/03/2025	Seldram Supplies Oxford Ltd	35134	£515.80	22587/cleaning & hygiene materials
06/03/2025	Society of Local Council Clerk	35135	£880.00	22681/CiLCA reg and SLCC subscription
06/03/2025	Spaldings Limited	35136	£675.94	22590/work supplies
06/03/2025	Springfield School PTA	35137	£50.00	22624/Grant - Springfield School
06/03/2025	Witney Grandparent & Toddler G	35138	£50.00	22625/Witney Grandparent group grant
06/03/2025	Viking Payments	35139	£460.57	22603/equipment & stationery
06/03/2025	WGS Power & Lighting Ltd	35140	£480.00	Christmas lights repairs
06/03/2025	WGS Power & Lighting Ltd	35115C	-£960.00	Cancelled cheque
07/03/2025	BARCLAYS BANK	DD	£29.72	BARCLAYS BANK CRGS 13JAN/12FEB

10/03/2025	BARCLAYCARD	DDR	£57.76	BARCLAYCARD - CHARGES
15/03/2025	BNP Paribas Leasing Solutions	Std Ord	£556.58	HP Grillo Mower
17/03/2025	Green Energy (UK) Plc	DD	£9,637.59	23160/1557816 February 25
19/03/2025	BNP Paribas Leasing Solutions	Std Ord	£360.70	Trimax Mower HP
24/03/2025	Biffa Waste Services Limited	DD	£1,124.00	22903/waste and glass recycling
24/03/2025	Watson Fuels	DD1	£587.74	22972/litres of diesel
26/03/2025	Epos Now Ltd	DD1	£22.80	23144/payments pro
27/03/2025	Epos Now Ltd	DD2	£16.80	23146/care plan
27/03/2025	Epos Now Ltd	DD4	£51.60	23145/care plan & payments pro
27/03/2025	Epos Now Ltd	DD5	£60.00	23147/support licence
31/03/2025	5A's Tool & Plant Hire	35141	£45.60	22818/petrol powered breaker hire
31/03/2025	Amazon Payments UK Ltd	35142	£436.94	22832/misc. supplies
31/03/2025	BASICS	35143	£74.30	22834/catering supplies
31/03/2025	Blueprint Imaging Limited	35144	£24.00	22835/corex boards
31/03/2025	Cotteswold Dairy Ltd (Cheltenham)	35145	£331.08	22840/café milk supplies
31/03/2025	[Halls customer]	35146	£150.00	22843/damage deposit refund
31/03/2025	Eynsham Cellars	35147	£388.08	22845/cafe supplies
31/03/2025	Hook Norton Brewery Co Ltd	35148	£268.20	22847/cafe supplies
31/03/2025	KJ's Motor Car Engineers Ltd	35150	£571.06	22849/vehicle maintenance
31/03/2025	The Keyholding Company	35149	£265.10	22896/alarm callout charges
31/03/2025	M & M Skip Hire Limited	35151	£540.00	22850/waste disposal /skips
31/03/2025	CASH	35153	£491.75	22895/petty cash imprest
31/03/2025	Print Ready Ltd	35154	£61.00	22878/printing posters & flyers
31/03/2025	Seldram Supplies Oxford Ltd	35155	£707.67	22852/works supplies
31/03/2025	SLCC Enterprises Ltd	35156	£138.00	22854/word & pdf docs- course
31/03/2025	A.K. Timms and Sons Limited	35157	£228.55	22857/bowls green paint
31/03/2025	Viking Payments	35159	£362.28	22872/equipment, inc. notice board & stationery
31/03/2025	Witney Steelstock Company	35160	£55.44	22874/10mm angle steel

31/03/2025	Panbridge Construction Ltd	35152	£1,068.00	22899/repair to external staircase C/Ex.
31/03/2025	Witney Trophy Centre Ltd	35158	£147.56	Civic reception items
31/03/2025	SSE Energy Solutions	DD6	£30.08	23164/lighting & buttercross
31/03/2025	STL Communications Ltd T/A Foc	DD7	£2,338.01	23166/ IT & telephone charges
31/03/2025	(Customer details redacted)	034935C	-£100.00	BURWELL DEPOSIT - CHQ034935
			<u>£28,302.47</u>	

Date:13/05/2025

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL 2024-25

Page 1

Time: 14:54

**Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/03/2025
for Cashbook 2 - BARCLAYS IMPREST A/C**

User: NW

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>			<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
BARCLAYS IMPREST A/C			31/03/2025		1,000.00
					<u>1,000.00</u>
<u>Unpresented Payments (Minus)</u>			<u>Amount</u>		
31/10/2024	34988	Witney Fairtrade Action Group		32.00	
13/12/2024	35064	Junior Parkrun		50.00	
13/12/2024	35080	Tower Hill Football Club		50.00	
13/12/2024	35084	Witney & District Twinning Ass		50.00	
31/01/2025	35110	Seldram Supplies Oxford Ltd		687.55	
06/03/2025	35120	4th Witney Rainbows		50.00	
06/03/2025	35130	Friends of Witney Community Su		50.00	
06/03/2025	35134	Seldram Supplies Oxford Ltd		515.80	
06/03/2025	35138	Witney Grandparent & Toddler G		50.00	
06/03/2025	35140	WGS Power & Lighting Ltd		480.00	
10/03/2025	DDR	BARCLAYCARD		57.76	
31/03/2025	35141	5A's Tool & Plant Hire		45.60	
31/03/2025	35142	Amazon Payments UK Ltd		436.94	
31/03/2025	35143	BASICS		74.30	
31/03/2025	35144	Blueprint Imaging Limited		24.00	
31/03/2025	35145	Cotteswold Dairy Ltd (Cheltenham)		331.08	
31/03/2025	35146	Sarah Craine		150.00	
31/03/2025	35147	Eynsham Cellars		388.08	
31/03/2025	35148	Hook Norton Brewery Co Ltd		268.20	
31/03/2025	35150	KJ's Motor Car Engineers Ltd		571.06	
31/03/2025	35149	The Keyholding Company		265.10	
31/03/2025	35151	M & M Skip Hire Limited		540.00	
31/03/2025	35153	CASH		491.75	
31/03/2025	35154	Print Ready Ltd		61.00	
31/03/2025	35155	Seldram Supplies Oxford Ltd		707.67	
31/03/2025	35156	SLCC Enterprises Ltd		138.00	
31/03/2025	35157	A.K. Timms and Sons Limited		228.55	
31/03/2025	35159	Viking Payments		362.28	
31/03/2025	35160	Witney Steelstock Company		55.44	
31/03/2025	35152	Panbridge Construction Ltd		1,068.00	
31/03/2025	35158	Witney Trophy Centre Ltd		147.56	
					<u>8,427.72</u>
					-7,427.72
<u>Unpresented Receipts (Plus)</u>					
				0.00	
					<u>0.00</u>
					-7,427.72
				Balance per Cash Book is :-	-7,427.72
				Difference is :-	0.00

**Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/03/2025
for Cashbook 2 - BARCLAYS IMPREST A/C**

Signatory 1:

NameSignedDate

Signatory 2:

NameSignedDate

Sort Code 20-97-48
Account No 70974765

SWIFTBIC BUKGB22

IBAN GB04 BUKB 2097 4870 9747 65

Issued on 02 April 2025

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL
MARKET SQUARE
WITNEY
OXFORDSHIRE
OX28 6AG

Your Business Current Account

At a glance

26 Mar - 01 Apr 2025

Date	Description	Money out £	Money in £	Balance £
26 Mar	Start Balance			1,000.00
	DD Direct Debit to Gocardless Ref: Eposnowltd-Pyjfms	22.80		977.20
	Cheque Issued Ref: 035121	50.00		927.20
	Giro Transfer From Account 70974641		72.80	1,000.00
27 Mar	DD Direct Debit to Gocardless Ref: Eposnowltd-7YV2Xgh	16.80		983.20
	DD Direct Debit to Gocardless Ref: Eposnowltd-7YV2Xgh	51.60		931.60
	DD Direct Debit to Gocardless Ref: Eposnowltd-7YV2Xgh	60.00		871.60
	Cheque Issued Ref: 035069	150.00		721.60
	Giro Transfer From Account 70974641		278.40	1,000.00
28 Mar	Cheque Issued Ref: 035127	116.40		883.60
	Giro Transfer From Account 70974641		116.40	1,000.00
31 Mar	DD Direct Debit to Sse Energy Supply Ref: 0085171-DD00958062	30.08		969.92
	DD Direct Debit to Stl Communications Ref: 0319-383	2,338.01		-1,368.09
	Cheque Issued Ref: 035122	400.37		-1,768.46
	Giro Transfer From Account 70974641		2,768.46	1,000.00
1 Apr	Balance carried forward			1,000.00
	Total Payments/Receipts	3,236.06	3,236.06	

Start balance	£1,000.00
Money out	£3,236.06
Commission charges	£0.00
Interest paid	£0.00
Money in	£3,236.06
End balance	£1,000.00

Your deposit is eligible for protection
by the Financial Services
Compensation Scheme.

Anything wrong? If you notice any incorrect or unusual transactions, see the next page for how to get in touch with us.

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 28/02/2025
for Cashbook 3 - BARCLAYS B P A

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
BARCLAYS B P A	28/02/2025		2,096,026.09
			<u>2,096,026.09</u>
<u>Unpresented Payments (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			2,096,026.09
<u>Unpresented Receipts (Plus)</u>			
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			2,096,026.09
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	2,096,026.09
		Difference is :-	0.00

Signatory 1:

NameSignedDate

Signatory 2:

NameSignedDate

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL
MARKET SQUARE
WITNEY
OXFORDSHIRE
OX28 6AG

Your Business Premium Account

At a glance

26 Feb - 04 Mar 2025

Date	Description	Money out £	Money in £	Balance £
26 Feb	Start Balance			2,199,816.02
	Giro to 70974765 Automatic	22.80		2,199,793.22
27 Feb	Chq/EP27/28 * 235617*Wit Town C*	47,000.00		2,152,793.22
	Transfer * 235621*Wit Town C*	52,000.00		2,100,793.22
	Giro to 70974765 Automatic	128.40		2,100,664.82
28 Feb	Giro to 70974765 Automatic	4,638.73		2,096,026.09
3 Mar	Giro to 70974765 Automatic	33.35		2,095,992.74
	% Interest Earned Gross For The Period 2 Dec 2024 - 2 Mar 2025		7,723.38	2,103,716.12
4 Mar	Giro to 70974765 Automatic	72.00		2,103,644.12
4 Mar	Balance carried forward			2,103,644.12
	Total Payments/Receipts	103,895.28	7,723.38	

Start balance	£2,199,816.02
Money out	£103,895.28
Money in	£7,723.38
▶ Gross interest earned	£7,723.38
End balance	£2,103,644.12

Your deposit is eligible for protection
by the Financial Services
Compensation Scheme.

Anything wrong? If you notice any incorrect or unusual transactions, see the next page for how to get in touch with us.

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 31/03/2025
for Cashbook 3 - BARCLAYS B P A

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
BARCLAYS B P A	31/03/2025		2,023,731.79
			<u>2,023,731.79</u>
<u>Unpresented Payments (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			2,023,731.79
<u>Unpresented Receipts (Plus)</u>			
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			2,023,731.79
		Balance per Cash Book is :-	2,023,731.79
		Difference is :-	0.00

Signatory 1:

NameSignedDate

Signatory 2:

NameSignedDate

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL
MARKET SQUARE
WITNEY
OXFORDSHIRE
OX28 6AG

Your Business Premium Account

At a glance

26 Mar - 01 Apr 2025

Date	Description	Money out £	Money in £	Balance £
26 Mar	Start Balance			2,026,967.85
	Giro to 70974765 Automatic	72.80		2,026,895.05
27 Mar	Giro to 70974765 Automatic	278.40		2,026,616.65
28 Mar	Giro to 70974765 Automatic	116.40		2,026,500.25
31 Mar	Giro to 70974765 Automatic	2,768.46		2,023,731.79
1 Apr	Balance carried forward			2,023,731.79
	Total Payments/Receipts	3,236.06	0.00	

Start balance £2,026,967.85

Money out £3,236.06

Money in £0.00

▶ Gross interest earned £0.00

End balance £2,023,731.79

Your deposit is eligible for protection
by the Financial Services
Compensation Scheme.

Anything wrong? If you notice any incorrect or unusual transactions, see the next page for how to get in touch with us.

POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Financial Matters referred from Spending Committees

Meeting Date: Monday, 9 June 2025

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk

Background

It is the Council's usual practice that all matters discussed, and recommendations made by spending Committees which have financial implications, are reported to this committee. This Committee is responsible for the overall fiscal management of the Council.

Current Situation

Parks & Recreation Committee – 12 May 2025

PR273 Finance Report – The Committee recommended that the council engage professional assistance to advise on whether to opt-to-tax for the West Witney Clubhouse renovation from a budget set at £5,000 (general reserve).

Halls Cemeteries & Allotments Committee – 19 May 2025

There were no financial implications from decisions made at this meeting for the current fiscal year outside of existing provision.

Stronger Communities Committee – 2 June 2025

Youth Council – The Committee recommended that a budget be sought for hosting the Le Touquet Youth Council at the Corn Exchange on 8th July 2025. Please see Grants & Subsidised Lettings report for further details.

Climate & Biodiversity Committee – 20 May 2025

There were no financial implications from decisions made at this meeting for the current fiscal year outside of existing provision.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – Covered in specific project reports.
- b) Biodiversity – Covered in specific project reports.
- c) Crime & Disorder – Covered in specific project reports.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency - Covered in specific project reports.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

All the Council's Committees receive financial reports to conduct its checks and balances and consideration is given to budgets and funding availability when agreeing expenditure.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

The benefits of these items should be considered at the time of recommendation.

Financial implications

The report forms part of the Council's mechanisms for budgetary control. Specific financial implications are detailed.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider agreeing the recommendations of the spending committees as detailed above.

POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE



Agenda Item: Grants & Subsidised Lettings

Meeting Date: Monday, 9 June 2025

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk/RFO

The purpose of this report is to present the Committee with grant requests from local organisations so they may agree dispersal.

Background

The Council maintains budgets for general discretionary grants and subsidised letting grants for groups or organisations which require financial assistance towards projects, costs and venue hire in order to provide services for the residents of Witney. Grant requests are usually considered by this Committee bi-annually at meetings in June and January, however there is occasion when they need to be considered at other times of the year due to Council Committee timeframes.

In the current year the budgets are as follows:

- Discretionary Grants (4100/407) - £20,000
- Subsidised Lettings – Corn Exchange/Burwell Hall (4110/407) - £1,500
- Subsidised Lettings – The Leys/Other (4110/202) - £5,500
- Annual grants - There are also specific budgets for a number of annual grants to organisations. For this meeting, they are covered in a separate report.

The RFO is currently completing the 'end of year' accounting processes so any carryover from the 24/25 year will be advised at the next meeting.

Current Situation

Discretionary Grant Applications

1. Apollos Clothing – A grant application form has been received asking for £1,080.00 to purchase 120 pairs of shoes. The group were invited to apply to both Witney Town Council and Witney Town Hall Charity and the application has been passed to the Charity for consideration. The application form and supporting information is attached as **Appendix A**.

Subsidised Lettings

1. Witney in Pink – A request has been received for £300 (£287) to use the Corn Exchange to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Witney in Pink. The application and supporting information can be seen as **Appendix B**.
2. Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action Group (OCVA) – To note an agreement made by officers to provide subsidised use of the Corn Exchange [on 3 September 2025] for a public awareness session to the sum of £140.00. In return, the Council received free access to the organisations funding database.
3. Centenarian birthday – To approve free day-time use of the Main Hall of the Corn Exchange for a small party to mark the occasion on Friday 22nd August 2025.

Other Matters

1. Le Touquet Youth Council Event – At the Stronger Communities meeting on 2 June, the Mayor advised the Le Touquet Youth Council would be visiting Witney from 8-10 July. The Committee was supportive of holding an event with the Witney Youth Council in the Gallery Room on 8 July.

This Committee is asked to endorse a budget for the above event, planned for Tuesday 8th July for the sum of £500 to provide a fish and chip supper and £70 for subsidised hire.

2. The Town Council has been awarded a grant of £1,236.24 towards 2x replacement springers (play equipment) at the Leys play area by Witney Town Hall Charity.

Grant monitoring 2024-25

West Oxfordshire Community Transport

The Council provides financial support each year for the sum of £23,500. Confidential bus usage figures from December - May (except February) are provided as **Appendix C**.

£50 for 50 Grants

Officers are still awaiting five sets of receipts from the twenty-three groups/organisations who were awarded from the scheme and continue to pursue them for the information.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality – The application helps to provide financial equality by providing shoes to those who are unable to afford them.
- b) Biodiversity – no direct impact from the contents of the report.

- c) Crime & Disorder – no direct impact from the contents of the report.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – the group promotes sustainability of clothing.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

The Council has policies and criteria for which it uses to award its grants to ensure public funds are allocated and used appropriately. If awards are deviated from these criteria, a robust reason should be given and agreed by the Committee.

The Council must ensure they are satisfied with the information provided in order to award funds and request further information if not. To not do so could incur reputational risk.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Benefits to Witney's community - young, elderly, and disadvantaged within the town are all covered both independently and jointly by several of the applicants.

Financial implications

At the Annual Council Meeting held on 17 May 2023, the Council invoked the General Power of Competence under which the ability to award these grants is made.

- Any discretionary award of subsidised let can be covered from the existing budgets listed at the beginning of the report.

Recommendations

Members are invited to:

1. Consider the grant request from Apollos Clothing.
2. Consider the request for subsidised use of the Corn Exchange from Witney in Pink, and for a centenarian birthday party.
3. Note the award for subsidised use of the Corn Exchange for OCVA.
4. Consider the recommendation of the Stronger Communities Committee to fund a small civic event welcoming the Le Touquet Youth Council on 8 July.
5. Note the grant awarded to the Council from Witney Town Hall Charity.
6. Note the bus usage figures from West Oxon Community Transport and update on monitoring of the £50 for 50 grants.



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Grant-aid to Local Organisations APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

(1) Your Organisation			
Name of Organisation		APOLLOS CLOTHING	
Registered Address*			
Post Code		Tel No.	
Contact Name	CHRIS GASKELL		
Position in Organisation	TRUSTEE AND TREASURER		
Registered Charity	YES	Registration No.	1205794
<p>Eliminating clothing poverty and caring for the environment.</p> <p>Food and energy prices continue to rise, and an increasing number of households in the UK are struggling to provide clothing for themselves or their growing families through the ever-changing seasons.</p> <p>At the same time, almost 400,000 tonnes of used, but still wearable clothing ends up in UK landfill every year.</p> <p>At Apollos Clothing we set out to solve both of these problems. We collect pre-loved and out-grown clothes, saving them from landfill and providing good quality, clean clothing to those most in need.</p>			
(2) Membership			
How many members do you have?		26 VOLUNTEERS WHO LIVE IN WITNEY	
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?		ALL	
Is membership restricted in any way?		NO	
What is your annual subscription, if any?		N/A	
Are you affiliated to a national organisation? If so, which one?		NO	
Local venue/meeting place		N/A	

(3) Grants	
<p>PURPOSE FOR WHICH THE GRANT IS REQUIRED:</p> <p>THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE EMERGENCY CLOTHING PARCELS THAT WE GIVE AWAY TO WITNEY'S MOST VULNERABLE ARE MADE UP OF DONATED CLOTHING FROM THE COMMUNITY. HOWEVER WE DO NEED TO PURCHASE SHOES FOR OUR BENEFICIARIES. THIS GRANT WILL ALLOW US TO BUY 120 PAIRS OF SHOES.</p>	
Amount of grant applied for	£1080.00
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant?	Yes
If YES please give details	Cost of living grant. October 2024
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation?	Yes
If YES please give details	Apollos Clothing is predominantly grant funded.
(4) Financial	
<p><i>Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.</i></p>	
(5) Fundraising	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WE HOLD FUNDRAISING EVENTS, WITH OUR LARGEST IN 2024 BEING HELD AT COGGES CHURCH CENTER. • WE RECEIVE GRANT FUNDING • WE SELL BRANDED MERCHANDISE. • WE RAISE MONEY FOR SPECIFIC PROJECTS EG. WINTER COATS, BRAS, UNDERPANTS, SHOES ETC. • WE HAVE AN AMAZON WISHLIST. • WE TAKE DONATIONS DIRECTLY FROM OUR COMMUNITY. 	
(6) General	
<p>Recipients of a grant from the Town Council should acknowledge the fact on all relevant literature.</p> <p>Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.</p>	
<p><i>I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid.</i></p>	

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WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL

Grant-aid to Local Organisations APPLICATION FORM

(PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM IN BLOCK CAPITALS)

(1) Your Organisation			
Name of Organisation		WITNEY in Pink.	
Registered Address*			
Post Code		Tel No.	
Contact Name	Jeanne Chattoe B.E.M		
Position in Organisation	Chair of Witney Action Group (i.e. Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary)		
Registered Charity	YES/NO	Registration No.	1127258
<p>What are the activities and/or aims of the organisation:</p> <p>Research into secondary breast cancer with the ultimate aim of providing a vaccine.</p>			
(2) Membership			
How many members do you have?		12	
Approximately how many of your members live in Witney?		10	
Is membership restricted in any way?		No	
What is your annual subscription, if any?		none	
Are you affiliated to a national organisation? If so, which one?		Against Breast Cancer	
Local venue/meeting place		Richmond Village	

(3) Grants	
Purpose for which the grant is required: <i>25th Anniversary of Witney in Pink - originally created by Jeanne Chattoe B.E.M.</i>	
Amount of grant applied for	£ <i>300</i>
Has your organisation previously applied to the Town Council for a grant? YES/NO	
If YES please give details	
Have you applied for a grant to any other body or organisation? YES/NO	
If YES please give details	
(4) Financial	
<i>Please enclose a copy of your latest audited accounts, a financial projection for the period following the balance sheet or a Business Plan if a new organisation.</i>	
(5) Fundraising	
What fundraising events or activities will your organisation be holding this year? <i>Witney in Pink. Sept. 2025. local fund raising - Football Club Witney/Shake Shop/Housers/Blue Boat Crafty Pint - Quiz - Parade - Big Band Entertainment</i>	
(6) General	
Recipients of a grant from the Town Council should acknowledge the fact on all relevant literature.	
Please provide or attach any additional information which may assist the Council in reaching its decision.	
I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and that I am authorised to make this application for Grant-aid. <i>WIP Member</i>	
Signed: _____	Date: _____

Please return your completed application form to the address overleaf, for the attention of the TOWN CLERK

For office use only:			
Acknowledged		Previously Applied	
Grant Aid Awarded/Amount	Y / N	Chq No.	

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POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE



Agenda Item: Bridge Street – Desilting

Meeting Date: 9th June 2025

Contact Officer: Operations Manager

Background

The purpose of the report is to update Members on the increased costs of this extra-ordinary project previously approved by the Town Council. The work was agreed upon to benefit the community, beyond the statutory duties and remit of the Council.

In January 2024 Officers submitted a report to the Council on Riparian and Watercourse Works. The purpose of the report was to update the Council on its progress with the management of the watercourse that fell under its responsibility, riparian management. Council approved the purchase of a portable winch so that the Council's maintenance team could remove trees from the watercourses.

The report also explored the opportunity for Witney Town Council to organise the de-silting of the bridge street - bridge. The Council approved the allocation of funding so officers could instruct contractors to make assessments and proposals for the works.

Current Situation

Update on Bridge Street Bridge De-Silting

The assessment of the bridge had been delayed by the high river levels throughout 2024 and then the scheduling of companies over the summer of 2024. However, the assessment for the works has now been completed and a full programme of works has been received along with costings.

The traditional method of de-silting the bridge would have been to use floating barges with excavators on top. This method did present issues as access to the bridge is restricted through high banks and buildings. The other problem it presented was that they wouldn't have been able to reach under the bridge to fully remove the silt. Fortunately, a contractor has been found that has proposed completing the work in another method. This would involve using grab lorries from the bridge to remove the majority of the silt and then floating a pontoon beneath the bridge to remove the remaining silt by hand and then anything remaining would be jetted.

The cost of these works has come in higher than the funding allocated against the project by the Council. Additionally, the works would also require a road closure that has not been

quoted in these works by the contractor. Officers will still proceed with getting a final quote from companies that use excavators to fully understand if these companies can complete the project or not.

There is still a large amount of work to do before the works can get underway, an application for a permit will need to be made to the Environment Agency (EA), works need to be approved by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) who own the bridge and approval for the road closure would need to be obtained.

Update on watercourse management

A portable winch has been purchased, and Members of the maintenance team have been trained in its use. As well as clearing the fallen tree at Riverside Gardens, the team have worked up the stretch of the Windrush from the leisure centre up to the Bishops Farm Mill flats. They also cleared the section of the Windrush on the west side of Mill Meadow up to the A40.

The purpose of this equipment and training was so that Town Council staff could remove fallen trees without the use of contractors and better fulfil its riparian responsibilities. To ensure Witney Town Council is seen as setting a good example we are clearing both sides of the river which is outside of our riparian responsibilities.

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Biodiversity – The work would need a permit from the Environment Agency which would assess the risk posed to plants and animals.
- b) Environment & Climate Emergency - The areas surrounding Bridge Street are within the flood zone, with the changing climate these are may become more susceptible to increased flooding frequency.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

- Reputational risk if not completely resolved
- Delays and congestion caused by a road closure
- EA & OCC approval

Financial implications

- Witney Town Council have a fund of £8,000 to help cover the costs of the de-silting works.
- The works detailed in the report have been quoted £9,800 exVAT this does not include the disposal of the silt or the road closure costs.

- Officers have requested quotes from traffic management companies but are still awaiting final costing.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report

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