

Strumpshaw Parish Council
Fixed Assets and Long Term Investments

Asset Description	Date Acquired	Purchase Value	Current Value	Location /Responsibility	Estimated Life	Usage/Capacity	Charges
Buckenham Wood				Buckenham Wood			
Community Hall building		25,546.00		Community Hall, Mill Roa			
Community Hall equipment		15,718.00		Community Hall, Mill Roa			
Land at Mill Road (community hall & allotments)				Mill Road, Strumpshaw			
Noticeboards	2015/16	2,758.00					
Noticeboards at Community Hall	May 2021	670.00		Community Hall, Mill Roa			
Noticeboards x 2		1,500.00					
Stile in The Loke		1,000.00		The Loke			
Stone Pit				Stone Pit			
		47,192.00					
Allotments							
Allotment fence		700.00		Allotments			
Allotment Shed	May 2021	4,980.00		Allotments. Mill Road			
		5,680.00					
Buckenham Wood Improvement & Development							
Benches x 2		1,000.00		Buckenham Wood			
Bicycle stands x 2		322.00		Buckenham Wood			
Gates x 2		2,000.00		Buckenham Wood & foot			
Noticeboards x 2	July 2021	922.00		Buckenham Wood			
Welcome sign		500.00		Buckenham Wood			
		4,744.00					
CH Improvement & Development							
Defibrillator		1,895.00		Community Hall, Mill Roa			
Hall Storage Shed	August 2021	1,720.00		Community Hall, Mill Roa			

Strumpshaw Parish Council
Fixed Assets and Long Term Investments

Asset Description	Date Acquired	Purchase Value	Current Value	Location /Responsibility	Estimated Life	Usage/Capacity	Charges
Intruder Alarm	12/2021	1,220.00		Community Hall, Mill Roa			
Pathway at Community Hall		2,395.00		Community Hall, Mill Roa			
		7,230.00					
PC Administration							
HP Pavilion keyboard & mouse	12/2021	56.00		Clerk			
HP Pavilion laptop 15eg0065na	12/2021	360.00		Clerk			
Laptop donated by Strumpshaw & District Asso		1.00					
NALC Ltd share certificate	22/09/2022		1.00	clerk			
		417.00	1.00				
PC Services							
Bus Shelter	23/06/2022	4,240.00		outside St Peter's Church			
SAM2 (Speed Awareness Message Sign)	12/2022	3,319.00		clerk			
		7,559.00					
Grand Total:		72,822.00	1.00				

STRUMPSHAW PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on the 27 July 2022

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of financial control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk and for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption. These financial regulations are designed to demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities.
- 1.2 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is a statutory office and shall be appointed by the council. [The Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this council and these regulations will apply accordingly.] The RFO, acting under the policy direction of the Council, shall administer the Council's financial affairs in accordance with proper practices. The RFO shall determine on behalf of the council its accounting records, and accounting control systems. The RFO shall ensure that the accounting control systems are observed and that the accounting records of the council are maintained and kept up to date in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.3 The RFO shall produce financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.4 At least once a year, prior to approving the annual return, the council shall conduct a review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.5 In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations shall mean the Regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and then in force.
- 1.6 In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in Governance and Accountability in local Councils in England and Wales – a Practitioners' Guide which is published jointly by NALC and SLCC and updated from time to time.

2. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET)

- 2.1 Detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the year shall be prepared each year by the RFO in the form of a budget to be considered by the council.
- 2.2 The Council shall review the budget not later than the end of November each year and shall fix the Precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The RFO shall issue

the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved budget.

- 2.3 The annual budgets shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.
- 2.4 The Council shall consider the need for and shall have regard to a three year forecast of Revenue and Capital Receipts and Payments which may be prepared at the same time as the annual Budget.

3 BUDGETARY CONTROL

- 3.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be incurred up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget.
- 3.2 No expenditure may be incurred that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure. 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.
- 3.3 The RFO shall regularly provide the Council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter.
- 3.4 The Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £200. The Clerk shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 3.5 Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year unless placed in an earmarked reserve by resolution of the council.
- 3.6 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 3.7 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

4. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT

- 4.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the Clerk in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 4.2 The Clerk shall complete the annual financial statements of the Council, including the council's annual return, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and shall submit them and report thereon to the Council.

- 4.3 The Clerk shall complete the Accounts of the Council contained in the Annual Return (as supplied by the Auditor appointed from time to time by the Audit Commission) and shall submit the Annual Return for approval and authorisation by the Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 4.4 The Clerk shall ensure that there is adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting, financial and other operations in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the Council shall, if the RFO or Internal Auditor requires, make available such documents of the Council which appear to the RFO or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit and shall supply the Clerk or Internal Auditor with such information and explanation as the RFO or Internal Auditor considers necessary for that purpose.
- 4.5 The Internal Auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work required by the council in accordance with proper practices. The Internal Auditor, who shall be competent and independent of the operations of the Council, shall report to Council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual written report in respect of each financial year. In order to demonstrate objectivity and independence, the internal auditor shall be free from any conflicts of interest and have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council.
- 4.6 The Clerk shall make arrangements for the opportunity for inspection of the accounts, books, and vouchers and for the display or publication of any Notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 4.7 The Clerk shall, as soon as practicable, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from the Internal or External Auditor, unless the correspondence is of a purely administrative matter.
- 4.8 From time to time the Clerk shall arrange for a member of the Council, who is not a bank signatory to carry-out a check of the financial records to ensure that the Financial Regulations are being adhered to, and that the said Regulations provide adequate safeguards for the level of complexity of the Council's financial transactions.

5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND CHEQUES

- 5.1 The Council's banking arrangements, including the Bank Mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council. They shall be regularly reviewed for efficiency.
- 5.2 A schedule of the payments required shall be prepared by the RFO and, together with the relevant invoices, be presented to Council. If the schedule is in order it shall be authorised by a resolution of the Council and shall be signed by two Councillors. If more appropriate the detail may be shown in the Minutes of the Meeting. A third Councillor will sign to confirm they have seen confirmation that the payments have been made.
- 5.3 Cheques drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule referred to in paragraph 5.2 or in accordance with paragraph 6.4, shall be signed by two members of Council.

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

6 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

6.1 All payments shall be effected by cheque, bacs or other order drawn on the Council's bankers.

6.2 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Clerk. The Clerk shall satisfy him/herself that the work, goods or services to which the invoice relates shall have been received, carried out, examined and approved.

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

6.4 If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of Council, where the Clerk and RFO certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, the Clerk may (notwithstanding para 6.3) take all steps necessary to settle such invoices provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Council.

6.5 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.

6.6 If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) may be made by variable Direct Debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable Direct Debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

7 PAYMENT OF SALARIES

7.1 As an employer, the council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salaries shall be as agreed by Council.

7.2 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, may be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to and ratified by the next available Council Meeting.

8 LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

- 8.1 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with Council policy.
- 8.2 The council shall consider the need for an Investment Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Policy shall be reviewed at least annually.
- 8.3 All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.
- 8.4 All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The terms and conditions of borrowings shall be reviewed at least annually.
- 8.5 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

9 INCOME

- 9.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.
- 9.3 The Council will review all fees and charges annually, following a report of the Clerk.
- 9.4 Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the Council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6 The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.
- 9.8 The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least every three years..
- 9.9 Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the Council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

10 ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

- 10.1 An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.
- 10.2 Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 10.3 All members and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11 (I) below.
- 10.4 The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the Minutes can record the power being used.

11 CONTRACTS

- 11.1 Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:
- (a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that these regulations shall not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
- (i) for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - (ii) for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
 - (iii) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
 - (iv) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;
 - (v) for additional audit work of the external Auditor up to an estimated value of £400 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council);
 - (vi) for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed price.
- (b) Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £50,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk shall invite tenders from at least three firms to be taken from the appropriate approved list.
- (c) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.

- (d) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- (e) 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.
- (f) If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £50,000 or if all the tenders are identical the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
- (g) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall contain a statement to the effect of Standing Orders 61, 63 and 64.
- (h) When it is to enter into a contract less than £50,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £5,000 and above £100 the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10 (3) above shall apply.
- (i) The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

- 12.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 12.2 Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the Council.
- 12.3 Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the Council and Clerk to the Contractor in writing, the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13 STORES AND EQUIPMENT

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

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

14 ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

- 14.1 The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds of properties owned by the Council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties owned by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 14.2 No property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £50.
- 14.3 The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

15 INSURANCE

- 15.1 Following the annual risk assessment (per Financial Regulation 17), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.
- 15.2 The Clerk shall make any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 15.3 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 15.4 The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to Council at the next available meeting.

16 CHARITIES

- 16.1 Where the Council is sole 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.

17 RISK MANAGEMENT

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

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

18 REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

18.1 It shall be the duty of the Council to review the Financial Regulations of the Council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these financial regulations.

19 MANAGEMENT OF THE ALLOTMENTS

19.1 The Clerk shall maintain an up to date record of the names and addresses of the tenants together with a copy of the tenancy agreements and a note of the amount of rent payable and the date(s) upon which the rent is due.

19.2 The amount of rent payable together with the frequency that the rent is collected shall be determined by the Council. (Also see paragraph 9.3.)

19.3 The Clerk shall advise the Council when any tenant fails to pay the rent due on time, and should any tenant wish to relinquish an allotment.

19.4 Any applications by the tenants to vary their tenancy agreement, or to erect fences or buildings, or to keep any livestock on the allotments shall be referred to the Council for determination.

Reviewed by Strumpshaw Parish Council on 16 July 2024

Signed:

Chairman

Dated:

STRUMPSHAW PARISH COUNCIL

Duties of the Responsible Financial Officer

1. Prepare financial reports for Council meetings, including Budget Monitoring, Receipts to date, Payment of Accounts and other relevant matters.
2. Prepare draft estimates for review by the Finance Committee prior to the November Parish Council meeting. When approved by the full Council these will form the basis for budget monitoring during the year.
3. Submit precept request to Broadland District Council.
4. Bank and record regularly all monies received and expended by the Council.
5. Ensure that any money due to the Council is billed promptly and collected promptly.
6. Manage cash flow and control of any investments and bank transfers.
7. Control cheques and online payments.
8. Reconcile Council bank accounts monthly.
9. Liaise with the treasurer of the Community Hall Committee and review bank reconciliations regularly and at least at 30th September and 31st March.
9. Submit VAT returns when appropriate and deal with VAT inspections.
10. Prepare and balance financial accounts in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations and report to the Council.
11. Prepare the Annual Return and supporting documents for external audit in accordance with the Regulations.
12. Submit PAYE and Pensions returns.
13. Review financial arrangements and controls annually and present to the full Council for their review.

Reviewed by Strumpshaw Parish Council on 16 July 2024

Signed:

Date:

Chairman

Strumpshaw Parish Council

Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015- “Internal audit:

“A relevant authority must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance processes.”

Scope:

The purpose of internal audit is to review whether the systems of financial and other control are effective; neither the internal nor the external auditor can be expected to look for fraud. The internal auditor does not give an opinion on the accounts, but is required to review controls and give recommendations.

The internal auditor is required to review the completeness and accuracy of the council’s accounts for the year, and to carry out a sample testing from the accounts to supporting documentation. The auditor shall also review payroll and VAT for reasonableness.

The internal auditor will discuss his findings with the responsible financial officer and will then write a report on his findings to the Parish Council. In the case of a serious problem the auditor will report directly to the chairman. Recommendations from the report will be recorded in the minutes and any action taken will be noted.

Independence:

The auditor shall not have any other role or employment within the council and the council confirms that this is the case.

The auditor will report under his own name and will address his report to the council.

Competence:

The internal auditor shall be competent to carry out the work. He should have an understanding of the accounting process, an understanding of the role of internal audit in reviewing systems, an awareness of risk management issues and an understanding of the accounting requirements, legal framework and powers of local councils.

Internal controls:

The Council shall carry out an annual review of its system of internal control and of its financial risk management.

The review of internal audit shall be approved by the full Council and by the responsible financial officer.

Reviewed by Strumpshaw Parish Council on 16 July 2024

Signed:
Chairman

Signed:
Responsible Financial Officer

Dated:

Dated:

Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Control

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003:

“(1) The relevant body shall be responsible for ensuring that the financial management of the body is adequate and effective and that the body has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of that body's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.

(2) The relevant body shall conduct a review at least once in a year of the effectiveness of its system of internal control”

Internal Control:

The system of internal control is designed to reduce the financial risk of the Parish Council to an acceptable level.

Financial Management:

The Parish Council has approved a set of financial standing orders which set out the way that Council's finances are to be managed. These are reviewed and approved every year.

The parish clerk is the responsible financial officer and is responsible for the day-to-day financial management of the Council. The duties of the responsible financial officer are reviewed and approved from time to time and include the regular reconciliation of the bank statements to the Council's cashbook report from Scribe.

The Finance Committee reviews the budget in detail in November and Full Council sets the precept for the forthcoming year. The precept request form must be submitted to Broadland District Council by the end of December.

The Community Hall Committee and Buckenham Wood Project Committee are both required to provide their budget submissions to the Finance Committee prior to the November Finance Committee meeting for consideration.

1. Cheque payments and Standing Orders

Two councillors, out of three named councillors, must sign all cheques, standing orders and direct debit agreements. The clerk may be a signatory, for banking purposes, but may not sign cheques, standing orders or direct debit forms.

The cheque signatories shall check the supporting document at the time of signing, to ensure that the cheque agrees with the amount of the invoice and the payee named on the invoice. The cheque number and date of payment shall be written on the relevant invoice.

The cheque signatories will also initial the cheque stub to confirm that the name on the cheque stub is the same as that on the cheque.

2. Online Payments

The parish clerk will prepare the list of payments awaiting authorisation from Scribe for each Council meeting and sign the list. The supporting invoices will be attached to the list. Once approved by the Council, two parish councillors will review the list, compare the payments to the supporting invoice and sign the list. The clerk will then make the payments online.

At the following Council meeting, the clerk will present the list, cross-referenced to the actual payments on the bank statement. This will be checked by a third councillor, who will evidence this check by signing the payments list.

The clerk will be permitted to make online payments between meetings where this is authorised by the full Council, Finance and Building Committee or the Community Hall Committee, up to limits agreed by the full Council. All payments made between meetings must be reported to the next full Council meeting and the payment checked to the bank statement by a parish councillor, and this check evidenced by the councillor's signature.

The clerk is also authorised to make payments up to £250 in the case of an emergency of where this is necessary to avoid fines or penalties for late payment.

At least one of the parish councillors must also have online access to the Council's Santander accounts so as to be able to carry out irregular checks on receipts, payments and the balances.

3. Bank Reconciliations

The clerk must reconcile the Scribe cashbook report to the bank statements each month. A copy of the clerk's bank reconciliation shall be checked by a councillor at the following Council meeting and the reconciliation shall be signed by the clerk and by the councillor as evidence of this check.

The clerk shall report the current balances from the Scribe cashbook at each Council meeting.

4. Receipts

The clerk shall undertake weekly online banking checks for income received and record the receipts on Scribe. A soft copy of the relevant documentation shall be uploaded against the Scribe transaction.

Paid invoices for Community Hall bookings will be updated by the clerk weekly and converted to a receipt. The Scribe booking system is automatically updated with any paid invoices (permitting fully paid hirers access to the hall).

The clerk will prepare a list of receipts since the last Council meeting and this shall be checked and signed by one councillor (other than the chair) at each Council meeting.

5. Community Hall

Income must be banked promptly. A summary of all income must be listed at the following Community Hall Committee meeting and be included in the minutes of that meeting. An efficient and effective system must be set up to ensure that all bookings are invoiced and paid promptly. The Committee must review income regularly for completeness.

Copies of Community Hall minutes must be sent to all parish councillors at least once they are approved by the following Community Hall Committee meeting, if not before.

6. Year-end

At the year-end, the Chairman of the Parish Council shall review the bank reconciliations for all bank accounts and check that they agree to the respective Scribe cashbook and other Scribe year end reports and shall countersign the bank reconciliations as evidence of this check.

7. Internal audit

The Council has appointed an independent and competent internal auditor and reviews this appointment once a year. The auditor shall report his findings to the full Council and complete Section 4 of the Annual Return.

8. External audit

The Council's external auditors are PKF, who complete Section 3 of the Annual Return; their comments and recommendations are reported to the full Council.

9. Review

This review shall be carried out once a year and recorded in the Council's minutes.

Reviewed by Strumpshaw Parish Council on 16 July 2024

Signed:
Chairman

Date:

Signed:
Responsible Financial Officer

Date:

“The greatest risk facing a local authority is not being able to deliver the activity or services expected of the Council.”

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the employer to identify any and all potential risks inherent in the place or practices. Based on a recorded assessment the employer should then take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible. Making sure that all employees are made aware of the results of the risk assessment.

This document has been produced to enable the Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them. In conducting this exercise, the following plan was followed:

- Identify the areas to be reviewed.
- Identify what the risk may be.
- Evaluate the management and control of the risk and record all findings.
- Review, assess and revise if required.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT				
Topic	Risk	H/M/L	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Business Continuity				
	Risk of Council not being able to continue its business due to an unexpected or tragic circumstance	L	Parish Councillors have the knowledge to guide a new clerk.	Review regularly
Precept				
	Adequacy of precept	M	To determine the precept amount required, the Parish Council regularly receives budget update information and the precept is an agenda item at full Council. At the Precept meeting Council receives a budget update report, including actual position and projected position to end the year and indicative figures or costings obtained by the Clerk. With this information the Council maps out the required monies for standing costs and projects for the following year and applies specific figures to budget headings, the total of which is resolved to be the precept amount to be requested from the District Council.	Monitor spending against budget
	Requirements not submitted to District Council	L	This figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing to the District Council. BDC would chase clerk for any non-return of form.	Existing procedure adequate

	Amount not received by Parish Council	L	The Clerk informs Council when the monies are received (approx May and November).	Existing procedure adequate
Financial Records				
	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations once per year
Bank and Banking	Inadequate checks	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements for banking, cheques and reconciliation of accounts.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary and bank signatory list when necessary, especially after an AGM and an election.
	Bank mistakes Loss Charges	L	The bank does make occasional errors in processing cheques which are discovered when the Clerk reconciles the bank accounts before meetings when the statement arrive, these are dealt with immediately by informing the bank and awaiting their correction.	Monitor the bank statements monthly
Cash				
	Loss through theft or dishonesty	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. There is no petty cash or float. Insurance covers loss of money.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
Reporting and Auditing				
	Information communication	L	A monitoring statement is produced regularly and is discussed and approved at the meeting. This statement includes a breakdown of receipts and payments balanced against the bank	Existing communication procedures adequate.
	Compliance	M	Council may carry out checks to comply with the Fidelity Guarantee. Independent and competent internal auditor is appointed by the parish council.	Procedures adequate Council may appoint a Councillor Auditor for Fidelity Compliance.
Direct costs Overhead expenses Debts				

	Goods not supplied but billed	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
	Incorrect invoicing	L	At each Council meeting the list of invoices awaiting approval is distributed to Councillors, and considered.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
	Cheque payable incorrect	L	The councillor signing the cheques should check the amount against supporting paperwork and initial it. Council approves the list of requests for payment.	Existing procedure adequate. Review the Financial Regulations when necessary.
	Unpaid invoices to council	L	Community Hall Committee has established a system for invoicing hirers of the hall and chasing unpaid amounts	Review regularly
Grants				
Grants and support - payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using the S137 power of expenditure.	Existing procedure adequate. Parish Councillors request a S137 rules if required.
Grants - receivable	Grants not recorded correctly or terms not met	L	Grants are reported to the Council. Facilitator will ensure grant terms are complied with.	Review regularly
Charges				
Charges – rentals receivable	Rentals not collected	L	The Clerk will issue allotment invoices and ensure rents received promptly. Totals will be checked when the annual accounts are produced.	Monitor
Hire fees for hall	Hire fee not collected	L	Community Hall Committee has established a system for invoicing hirers of the hall and chasing unpaid amounts	Review regularly

	Insurance implication	L	The tenants/hirers arrange their own insurance if thought necessary.	Existing procedure adequate. Review on turnover of tenant.
Best value Accountability				
	Work awarded incorrectly	L	Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work required to be undertaken or goods. For major contract services, formal competitive tenders would be sought	Existing procedure adequate. Include when reviewing Financial Regulations.
	Overspend on services	M	If a problem is encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation, check the quotation/tender, research the problem and report to Council.	Existing procedure adequate. Include when reviewing Financial Regulations.
Salaries and associated costs				
	Salary paid incorrectly	L	The Parish Council authorises the pay of the clerk who runs HMRC Basic Tools to calculate tax and NIC . Salary rates are assessed and reviewed from time to time. They generally adhere to NJC scales	Internal auditor checks and HMRC Basic Tools used
	Wrong hours paid	L	The hours are the same each week. Any overtime will be approved by the council or Finance & Building Committee	Monitor payments
	Wrong rate paid	L	Annual increases in line with external recommendations	Internal auditor checks
	False employee	L	There is only one employee so it would be almost impossible to claim for another	Internal auditor checks
	Wrong deductions of NI or Tax	L	Salary analysis and slips are produced by the Clerk monthly together with a schedule of payments to the Inland Revenue (for Tax and NI)... The Tax and NI is worked out using HMRC Basic Tools	Internal auditor checks and HMRC Basic Tools used
	Unpaid Tax & NI contributions to the Inland Revenue	L	All Tax and NI payments are submitted monthly and HMRC Basic Tools print-outs are attached to payroll payment for approval . All contracts of employment contain a section on overpayment and recoup.	Internal auditor checks and HMRC Basic Tools used
Employees				

	Loss of key personnel	L	If the clerk were to be lost, the work could be done by a neighbouring clerk on a short-term basis with a bit of goodwill	Existing procedure adequate
	Fraud by staff	L	The requirements of the Fidelity Guarantee insurance to be adhered to with regards to Fraud	Existing procedure adequate.
	Actions undertaken by staff	L	The Clerk should be provided with relevant training, reference books, access to assistance and legal advice required to undertake the role.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Health & Safety	L	The Clerk works from her own home and will be expected to exercise H&S issues on her own behalf and to use common sense	Existing procedure adequate.
Councillors				
Councillor allowances	Councillors over-paid Income tax deduction	L	No allowances are allocated to Parish Councillors (their choice)	No procedure required
Elections				
Election costs	Risk of an election cost	L/M	Risk is higher in an election year. When an election is due the Clerk will obtain an estimate of costs from the District Council for a full election and an uncontested election. There are no measures which can be adopted to minimise the risk of having a contested election as this is a democratic process and should not be stifled.	Existing procedure adequate
VAT				
VAT	Re-claiming/charging	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out the requirements. Vat is reclaimed at least annually	Existing procedure adequate
Annual Return				
Annual Return	Submit within time limits	L	Employer's Annual Return is completed and submitted online within the prescribed time frame, by the Clerk. Annual Return is completed and signed by the internal auditor, submitted to the Council for final completion and signing, then checked and sent on to the External Auditor within time limit.	Existing procedures adequate
Legal Powers				

	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved and minuted at Full Parish Council Meetings.	
Minutes/Agendas/Notices Statutory Documents				
	Accuracy and legality	L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed method by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements.	Existing procedure adequate.
		L	Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting. Minutes and agenda are displayed according to the legal requirements	Existing procedure adequate.
	Business conduct	L	Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair. Councillors have signed Council's Code of Conduct	Existing procedure adequate. Members to adhere to Code of Conduct.
Members interests				
	Conflict of interest	L	Although not a requirement, so long as already declared on the register of interests, the declaring of disclosable pecuniary interests by members at a meeting should be an obvious process to remind Councillors of their duty and should remain on the agenda.	Existing procedure adequate
	Register of Members interests	M	Register of Members Interest forms should be reviewed regularly by Councillors.	Members take responsibility to update their Register. They are reminded at the annual meeting.
Insurance				
	Adequacy	L	An annual review is undertaken (before the time of the policy renewal) of all insurance arrangements in place	Existing procedure adequate
	Cost	L	Employer's and Employee liability insurance is a necessity and must be paid for.	Review insurance provision annually.
	Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L M	Ensure compliance measures are in place. Ensure Fidelity checks are in place.	. Review of compliance.
Data protection				

	Policy Provision	L	The Council is registered with the Information Commissioner	Ensure annual review of registration
Freedom of Information Act				
	Policy	L	The Council has a model publication scheme for Local Councils in place.	Existing procedure adequate
	Provision	M	There have been no requests for information to date but the Clerk is aware that if a substantial request arrives then this may require many hours of additional work. The Council is able to request a fee if the work will take more than 15 hours but the applicant also has the right to re-submit the request broken down into sections, thus negating the payment of a fee.	Monitor and report any impacts of requests made under the F of I Act.

PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS				
Subject	Risk(s) Identified	H/M/L	Management/control of risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Assets				
	Loss or Damage	L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions.	Existing procedure adequate
	Risk/damage to third party(ies)/property	L	An annual review of assets is undertaken for insurance provision, storage and maintenance provisions.	Existing procedure adequate.
Maintenance				
	Poor performance of assets or amenities	L	All assets owned by the Parish Council are regularly reviewed and maintained.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Loss of income or performance	L	All repairs and relevant expenditure for these repairs are actioned/authorised in accordance with the correct procedures of the Parish Council.	Existing procedure adequate.
	Risk to third parties	L	All assets are insured and reviewed annually. The trees on public amenity land (Buckenham Woods) are inspected regularly by tree warden and visitors report problems	Review urgently if tree warden changes

Notice boards				
	Risk/damage/injury to third parties	L	Parish Council has 6 notice boards sited around the villages. All locations have approval by relevant parties, insurance cover, inspected regularly by the Clerk - any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council. Keys held by the Clerk.	Existing procedure adequate
	Road side safety	L	All locations have approval by relevant parties, insurance cover, inspected regularly by the Clerk - any repairs/maintenance requirements brought to the attention of the Parish Council. Keys held by the Clerk.	Existing procedure adequate.
Street furniture: Bus Shelter				
	Damage by vandalism, risk to users	L	Location approved by Norfolk County Council Highways. Insurance company emailed 4/7/22 to request bus shelter added onto policy	Inspect regularly
Meeting location				
	Adequacy	L	The Parish Council Meetings are held at Community Hall.	Community Hall is built to latest requirements and standards.
	H&S	L	The Community Hall Committee carries out H&S review which is approved by the full Council Hall will be insured	Review and monitor
Council records				
	Paper loss through theft	L	The Parish Council records are stored at the clerk's house. All computer generated documents are also stored online. Records which include historical correspondence, minute books are archived at County Hall.	Although unlikely to be lost, provision should be made for archiving where appropriate.

			Copies, leases for land or property, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries etc are filed at the clerk's home.	
	Paper loss through fire	M	<p>The Parish Council records are stored at the clerk's house.</p> <p>Records which include historical correspondence, minute books are archived at County Hall.</p> <p>Copies, leases for land or property, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries etc are filed at the clerk's home</p>	Although unlikely to be lost, provision should be made for archiving where appropriate.
	Paper loss through damage	L	<p>The Parish Council records are stored at the clerk's house.</p> <p>Records which include historical correspondence, minute books are archived at County Hall.</p> <p>Copies, leases for land or property, records such as personnel, insurance, salaries etc. are filed at the clerk's home.</p>	Although unlikely to be lost, provision should be made for archiving where appropriate.
	Electronic loss through: Theft, fire, damage corruption of computer	LM	The Parish Council's electronic records are stored on the Clerk's computer. Electronic papers are also saved remotely on OneDrive.	Some thought should be given to archiving older records

Reviewed by Strumpshaw Parish Council on 16 July 2024

Signed:

Date:

Chairman