Charvil
Parish Council
Chairman: Matt Walker

Clerk to the Council
Miranda Parker
Charvil Village Hall
Charvil
Reading
Berks
RG10 9TT

www.charvilparishcouncil.gov.uk

FOR THE ATTENTION OF ALL MEMBERS OF CHARVIL PARISH COUNCIL

You are hereby summoned to attend the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on **Monday 18th May 2026 at 8pm** in Charvil Village Hall for the purpose of transacting the following business**.** Apologies for absence should be forwarded to the Clerk.

Miranda Parker, Parish Clerk

1. Apologies for absence

2. Election of Chairman

3. Election of Vice-Chairman

4. Signing of Declarations of Office by Chair and Vice Chair

5. To decide whether to adopt the new Committee structure, or to defer

All below dependent on Item 5

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN:

6. Planning……Committee
7. Amenities Committee
8. Staffing Committee
9. Finance Committee
10. Complaints Committee
11. Emergency Committee

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE VICE-CHAIRMEN

12. Planning …….Committee
13. Amenities Committee
14. Staffing Committee
15. Finance Committee
16. Complaints Committee
17. Emergency Committee

ELECTION OF OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT ALREADY ALLOCATED FROM ABOVE

18. Councillor Members of Planning ……. Committee
19. Councillor Members of Amenities Committee
20. Council Members of Staffing Committee
21. Councillor Members of Finance Committee
22. Councillor Members of Complaints Committee
23. Councillor Members of the Emergency Committee

ELECTION OF LEAD MEMBERS ON EACH AREA IN EACH COMMITTEE

24. Planning
25. Environment
26. Highways
27. Village Hall
28. East Park Farm

* Copies attached and/or forwarded

29. ST Patrick's Recreation Ground
30. Website/Social Media/Social Engagement

31. External Representative as Data Protection Officer

32. **APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS:**
    Wokingham Borough/Parish Working group
    Northern Parishes Communication Group
    BALC

Trustees to Charities:

a. Sonning and District Education and Welfare Trust
b. Robert Palmer's Alms House Charity
c. Poor's Land Charity

32**. Any other election issues at the discretion of the Chairman**

33. Review of Standing Orders
34. Review of Risk Management and Financial Regulations, and the Scheme of Delegations – approve recommendations from Finance Committee *
35. Review of Terms of Reference for all Committees dependent on Item 5
36. To re-affirm that the Council qualifies for the adoption of the General Power of Competence
37. To note that all Councillors qualify for the Councillor Allowance, and that if they wish to take this up, they need to notify the clerk with relevant details as soon as possible.
38. Review of other Policies – please see website https://charvilparishcouncil.gov.uk/policies#gsc.tab=0:
    Code of Conduct
    Communications Policy
    Complaints Policy
    Councillor Expenses Policy
    Freedom of information Policy
    Freedom of information Notice
    Grant Policy
    Policy for management of the facilities for hire at a Discounted rate
    Hirer's Privacy Policy
    Hiring facilities at a discounted rate policy
    Inflatables and Soft Play Policy
    Information and Data Protection Policy
    IT and Cybersecurity Policy
    Management of the Facilities for Hire
    Metal Detecting Policy
    Policy for Use of Inflatables and Soft Play Equipment
    Publication Scheme – superseded by ICO Document for Approval
    Retention Scheme
    Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

* Copies attached and/or forwarded

Short Guide to GDPR
Council Staff and Councillor Privacy Policy
Tree and hedge Management Policy
Website Accessibility Statement

39. To adopt the Charvil Publication Scheme based on the ICO scheme *
40. To consider and adopt the Draft Social Media Protocol *

2026 Election to Council Posts

	Proposer	Seconded	Elected
CHAIRMAN	………………	………………	……………….
VICE-CHAIRMAN	………………	………………	……………….
COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN / LEAD MEMBERS:			
Planning….	………………	………………	……………….
Amenities	………………	………………	……………….
Staffing	………………	………………	………………
Finance	....	....	....
Complaints	………………	………………..	………………….
Emergency	……………….	……………….	………………

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE VICE-CHAIRMEN/ VICE-LEAD MEMBERS

	Proposer	Seconded	Elected
PEH	………………	………………	……………….
Amenities	………………	………………	……………….
Staffing	....	....	....
Finance	....	....	....
Complaints	………………	……………….	……………….
Emergency	………………	………………	…………………

Other Councillor Members of the Planning Committee

1. PC Chairman/vice Chair 2. Plan Chairman 3.Plan Vice Chair 4. 5.

* Copies attached and/or forwarded

Councillor Members of the Amenities Committee

1 PC Chairman/vice chair 2 Am Chair 3 Am Vice Chair 4…………… 5………………

Councillor Members of Staffing Committee - Chair is observer at these meetings

1Staffing Chair 2 Staffing vice Chair 3…………………. 4………………. 5………..

COUNCILLOR MEMBERS OF COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

1………………… 2…………………. 3……………… 4……………….. 5……..

Councillor members of Emergency Committee

ELECTION OF LEAD MEMBERS ON EACH AREA IN EACH COMMITTEE

PLANNING
ENVIRONMENT
HIGHWAYS
VILLAGE HALL
EAST PARK FARM
ST PATRICK'S
WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA/Community Engagement

Data Protection Officer (Monitoring officer at WBC)

Wokingham Borough Parish/Liaison Group 1…………….. 2……………………
Northern Parishes Communication Group
BALC

1. Robert Palmer Alms-house Charity – Brian David
2. Sonning and District Education and Welfare Trust –
3. Poor's Land Charity –

Review of Standing orders
Adoption of new Finance Regulations
Review of Terms of Reference
Councillor Allowances
Review of Policies

* Copies attached and/or forwarded

Charvil

Parish Council

Financial Regulations

Version 1.3 – May 2026

Contents

1 Document Control Information

Title: Financial Regulations

Date: May 2026

Version: 1.3

Authors: Charvil Parish Council

Version Control:

Version	Date	Description
1.0	May 2018	Policy Published
1.1	May 2024	Reviewed & Updated
1.2	May 2025	Reviewed and Updated
1.3	May 2026	Reviewed and updated

Approved by:

Title	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of the Council	Matt Walker		
Clerk to the Council	Miranda Parker		

Planned Review Date:

May 2027

2 References

3 General

3.1 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.

3.2 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.

3.3 Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.

3.4 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.

3.5 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.

3.6 **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**

3.7 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 £3000

4 Risk Management and Internal Control

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

4.2 The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by the 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.

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

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

4.5 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.

4.6 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 or Finance Committee.

4.7 Windows 365 is used by the three main Council Staff, and so all Council documents are backed up in the Cloud. Payroll, Finance and Bookings software are third party providers, backed up in the Cloud. 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.

5 Accounts and Audit

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

5.2 **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;**

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

5.4 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.

5.5 **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**.

5.6 **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.

5.7 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.

5.8 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
- 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.

5.9 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.

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

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

6 Budget and Precept

6.1 **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.**

6.2 Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the council at least annually in December 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 Staffing. The RFO will inform committees of any salary implications before they consider their draft budgets.

6.3 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, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.

6.4 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.

6.5 Each committee shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the council not later than the end of November each year.

6.6 The draft budget with any committee proposals and 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.

6.7 Having considered the proposed budget and forecast, the council shall determine its council tax 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.

6.8 **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.**

6.9 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.

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

6.11 Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council.

7 Procurement

7.1 **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.

7.2 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.

7.3 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.

7.4 **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.**

7.5 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:

7.6 For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the council. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.

7.7 **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation[1] regarding the advertising of contract opportunities and the publication of notices about the award of contracts.**

7.8 For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT the Clerk shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes;

7.9 where the value is between £500 and £3,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk shall try to obtain 3 estimates which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.

7.10 For smaller purchases, the clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.

7.11 **Contracts must not be split into smaller lots to avoid compliance with these rules.**

7.12 The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to those items below:

- specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
- repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
- works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
- goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.

7.13 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.

7.14 The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

7.15 Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:

- the Clerk, under delegated authority, for any items below £750 excluding VAT.
- the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council or Chair of the appropriate committee, for any items below £2,500 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;

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

7.17 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.

7.18 No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council except in an emergency.

7.19 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 £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 Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

7.20 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.

7.21 An official order or letter or email 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.

7.22 Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the RFO.

8 Banking and Payments

8.1 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 Unity Trust Bank. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.

8.2 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.

8.3 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.

8.4 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.

8.5 All payments shall be made by online banking, in accordance with a resolution of the council, unless the council resolves to use a different payment method.

8.6 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.

8.7 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.

8.8 A list of such payments shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the council for information only.

8.9 The Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payments only in the following circumstances:

- any payments of up to £750 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
- payments of up to £2,500 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
- 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.

- Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £20,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.

8.10 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. The council 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.

9 Electronic Payments

9.1 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 four 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.

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

9.3 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.

9.4 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.

9.5 In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator an authorised signatory shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.

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

9.7 Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online.

9.8 A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next council meeting and form part of the minutes.

9.9 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 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.

9.10 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.

9.11 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.

9.12 Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by two of the Clerk and 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.

9.13 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.

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

10 Cheque Payments

10.1 Cheques or orders for payment in accordance in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two members.

10.2 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.

10.3 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.

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

11 Payment Cards

11.1 Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk 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.

11.2 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.

11.3 Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk and any balance shall be paid in full each month.

11.4 Personal credit or debit cards of members of staff shall not be used except for expenses of up to £1,000 including VAT, incurred in accordance with council policy.

12 Petty Cash

12.1 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 for example for postage or minor stationery items shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

13 Payment of Salaries and Allowances

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

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

13.3 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.

13.4 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.

13.5 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.

13.6 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.

13.7 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.

13.8 Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

14 Loans and Investments

14.1 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.

14.2 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.

14.3 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.

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

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

14.6 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.

15 Income

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

15.2 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.

15.3 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.

15.4 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.

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

15.6 The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software. Any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made at least annually at the end of the financial year.

16 Payments Under Contracts for Building or Other Construction Works

16.1 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.

16.2 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.

17 Stores and Equipment

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

17.2 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.

17.3 Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.

17.4 The RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores, at least annually.

18 Assets, Property and Estates

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

18.2 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.

18.3 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.

18.4 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).

18.5 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.

19 Insurance

19.1 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.

19.2 The Clerk shall give prompt notification of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

19.3 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.

19.4 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.

20 Charities

20.1 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.

21 Suspension and Revision of Financial Regulations

21.1 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.

21.2 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.

21.3 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.

22 Review

22.1 These Regulations will be reviewed annually.

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 18D 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.

Charvil

Parish Council

Risk Management Policy

Version 1.4 – May 2026

Contents

1 Document Control Information

Title: Risk Management Policy

Date: May 2026

Version: 1.4

Authors: Charvil Parish Council

Version Control:

Version	Date	Description
1.0	May 2016	Policy Published
1.1	May 2018	Reviewed & Updated
1.2	May 2024	Reviewed & Updated
1.3	May 2025	Reviewed & updated
1.4	May 2026	Reviewed & updated

Approved by:

Title	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of the Council	Matt Walker		
Clerk to the Council	Miranda Parker		

Planned Review Date:

May 2027

2 References

3 Areas where there may be scope to use insurance to help manage risk

Risk Identifications

3.1 Protection of physical assets e.g. buildings, furniture and equipment.

- All physical assets are insured with Ecclesiastical Insurance under Policy LCO02563. The insurance is cross-checked with the Council's Asset Register annually or as required (e.g. in case of materials additions).

3.2 Risk of damage to third party property or individuals as a result of Charvil Parish Council (CPC) providing services or amenities to the public.

- CPC has Public Liability Insurance of £10,000,000. It also has personal accident liability cover for employees, members and volunteers under the above policy.

3.3 Risk of consequential loss of income or the need to provide essential services following critical damage, loss or non-performance by a third party (consequential loss).

Included in insurance policy cover:

3.4 Loss of cash through theft or dishonesty (fidelity guarantee).

- CPC has Fidelity Guarantee cover up to £500,000 for all employees. Funds are further protected through dual signatory banking arrangements by Councillors.

3.5 Legal liability as a consequence of asset ownership (public liability).

- See (3.2) above.

3.6 Employer's Liability Insurance

- CPC has Employer's liability Insurance cover up to £10 Million

3.7 Risk to individual Councillors and/or Employees

- CPC has insurance to protect the interests of individual Councillors and employees, whose actions, where conducted within CPC's Standing Orders and financial regulations, are considered to be conducted by CPC as a legal entity.

Internal Controls

3.8 Maintain an up-to- date register of Assets and investments.

- An Asset Register is compiled annually by the Responsible Financial Officer and should be presented to CPC with Annual Accounts each year.

3.9 Regular maintenance for physical assets

- The Council Staff undertake regular inspections of the facilities. Maintenance of buildings, sites and equipment is undertaken on a responsive basis, in addition to budgeted Capital Projects for major refurbishment. Playground equipment is checked by Council Staff weekly and independently by ROSPA on an annual basis. Trees are periodically checked visually for any hazards weekly; in case of any health and safety concerns noted or in keeping with statutory guidance timescales, specialist arboriculture advice is sought.

3.10 Annual Review of risk and the adequacy of insurance cover.

- The Responsible Financial Officer reviews the insurance cover annually, makes recommendations to CPC and updates cover as required

3.11 Ensuring robustness of insurance providers.

- The Responsible Finance Officer will only consider insurance providers that are widely used by Parish Councils.

Internal Audit Assurance

3.12 Review of internal controls in place and their documentation.

- Internal controls are reviewed as necessary by the Clerk and Internal Auditor. Recommendations from the Clerk and Internal Auditor are submitted to CPC.

3.13 Review of management arrangements regarding insurance cover.

- This forms part of review at time of annual renewal.

3.14 Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to management.

- This is undertaken as part of the audit process. Reports are presented to CPC and minuted accordingly.

3.15 Amenities and delegated financial responsibilities

- A separate internal review / audit of the Amenities procedures and financial arrangements is undertaken annually by a nominated person, who is not a member of the Amenities committee and is recommended to be entirely separate to CPC

4 Areas where there may be scope to work with others to help manage risk

Risk Identification

4.1 Security for vulnerable buildings, amenities or equipment.

- The Council's owned and leased amenities, including Charvil Amenities, are let to several regular users who ensure buildings are secure after use. Amenities are also used by several ad hoc hirers and security is ensured by the Amenities Manager, the Caretaker, or if it is a late-night booking, then by Taurus Security. The Village Hall is alarmed. In the event of any breaches of security, appropriate measures are taken as soon as practicable to re-secure the property. Keys and alarm codes are held by the Clerk, Amenities Manager, the Caretaker and other delegated Councillors as appropriate. CPC reviews security for its amenities from time to time.

4.2 Maintenance for vulnerable buildings, amenities or equipment.

- All premises are maintained within approved budget unless the Contingency Budget has to be used for emergency measures. In-house maintenance is undertaken where possible and contractors used as needed, with quotations received in advance of all works, unless there is a dire emergency that needs dealing with urgently. The Amenities Committee makes recommendations to the Finance Committee (and thereby to Full Council) for any more substantial maintenance requirements (e.g. roof repair).

4.3 Banking Services.

- Two members to approve electronically an order to be drawn up by the clerk. If a cheque payment needs to be made, then two signatories need to sign it. If Direct Debits are to be set up, these must be approved by full council and the instruction signed by two members. The Full Council reviews all payments. This procedure may be suspended in emergencies in extremis, such as in the case of the Covid-19 pandemic, to allow payments with one signature, but these would still have to be approved in writing by two other signatories and as soon as conditions allow, the previous arrangements would be adhered to.

4.4 Provision of amenities/facilities for events for local community groups.

- CPC has approved the use of its sites for the fete on a free-of-charge basis. Users are required to ensure their own public liability insurance cover.
- CPC may approve occasional other free use of its amenities by charity and community groups – any such instances to be approved by and recorded at full Council.

4.5 Professional services, contractors etc.

- CPC endeavours to ensure that wherever possible it has the opportunity to select (from several) the provider of any professional service it requires. Any professionals whose services it uses are well established and often selected on recommendation. Ideally a short-list of three is drawn up.

Internal Controls

4.6 Standing Orders and financial regulations dealing with the award of contracts for services or the purchase of capital equipment.

- CPC has Standing Orders that govern the awarding of contracts. These are fully reviewed every two years (or as required where there are material changes to applicable regulations).

4.7 Regular reporting on performance by contractors/suppliers.

- This is done on an ad hoc basis at Council and Amenities meetings

4.8 Review of contracts.

- Contracts are reviewed by staff and subsequently by CPC as part of its budget process, in line with the Standing Orders and CPC's financial regulations, including endeavours to receive sufficient quotations to assure best value.

4.9 Clear statements of management responsibility for each service.

- Under Standing Orders, the Amenities Committee has delegated management responsibility for its own budgets, subject to the overall CPC budget.

4.10 Regular scrutiny of performance against targets.

- See (4.7) and (4.9).

4.11 Arrangements to detect and deter fraud and/or corruption.

- Invoices are subjected to scrutiny by both the RFO and are reviewed by the Chair of Finance (or their deputy) at each Council meeting. Cheque signatories and the designated approvers for internet banking are councillors – any two from a list of four.

4.12 Regular bank reconciliations independently reviewed.

- Bank statements are received monthly and are seen by the Clerk (RFO). A reconciliation is presented at each CPC meeting at which time the bank balances are confirmed. Bank reconciliations are spot-checked twice per year by the Chair of Finance or other delegated Councillors, including at year end. Bank Statements and reports will be presented from financial software at least twice a year at separate Finance meetings

Internal Audit Assurance

4.13 Review of internal controls in place and their documentation.

- Internal controls are reviewed as necessary by the Clerk and Internal Auditor. Recommendations from the Clerk and Internal Auditor are submitted to Council annually and actions arising are reviewed and monitored.

4.14 Review of minutes to ensure legal powers are available and the basis of the powers recorded and correctly applied.

- The Clerk undertakes to ensure that CPC does not act 'Ultra Vires' when a decision is taken. It is recorded if CPC decides against the Clerk's advice. Where appropriate, legal powers bestowed on CPC will be recorded in the minutes against decisions taken. The minutes of meetings are also reviewed during the audit process.

4.15 Review and testing of arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption.

- The use of Standing Orders, internal controls and consideration by CPC are all methods which contribute to prevent and deter fraud and corruption.

4.16 Review of adequacy of insurance cover provided by suppliers.

- Any contractors working for CPC are asked for proof of insurance cover, where applicable and appropriate.

4.17 Testing of specific internal controls and report findings to management.

- This is undertaken as part of the audit process. Reports are presented to CPC and minuted accordingly.

5 Areas where there may be a need to self-manage risk

Risk Identification

5.1 Keeping proper financial records in accordance with statutory requirements.

- Financial records kept in accordance with the statutory requirements fall within the responsibility of CPC and are reviewed as part of the Audit process.

5.2 Ensuring all business activities are within legal powers applicable to parish councils.

- See Section 4

5.3 Complying with restrictions on borrowing.

- CPC has no current borrowing arrangements. Should CPC look to borrow funds for capital expenditure, such a decision is to be taken by full Council and in line with statutory legislation (currently the Local Government Act 2003, which requires the permission of the Secretary of State)

5.4 Ensuring that all requirements are met under employment law and Inland Revenue regulations.

- Inland Revenue calculations are made by the Clerk and subject to the Audit process. Salary forecasts are undertaken as part of the budget setting process and incremental increases are approved by Council. Independent legal advice is taken as necessary. The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) is offered to all employees in line with current legislation and CPC adheres to the living wage.

5.5 Ensuring all requirements are met under Customs and Excise regulations (especially VAT).

- All such requirements are met by the Responsible Financial Officer and the Internal Audit process.

5.6 Ensuring the adequacy of the annual precept within sound budgeting arrangements.

- The budgets for the village's major amenities are set by the Amenities Committee and the Chair of Finance. It is then reviewed along with the Parish Council budget by Finance Committee and approved by full Council in accordance with CPC's budget setting procedure.

5.7 Ensuring the proper use of funds granted to local community bodies under specific powers or Section 137.

- Grant applications are considered by CPC. Section 137 grants are listed separately in the annual accounts.

5.8 Proper, timely and accurate reporting of CPC business in the minutes.

- CPC minutes are prepared by the Clerk. They are distributed to members in advance of the subsequent meeting, verified as a correct record as the first business of that meeting and signed at the meeting. Failure to do so is recorded. Committee minutes are reviewed at the next full Council meeting and actions and resolutions from committee minutes are adopted.

5.9 Responding to electors wishing to exercise their rights of inspection.

- The rights of inspection by electors is adhered to in accordance with current legislation. In accordance with current legislation, all relevant documents are available on demand (during office hours) or by post and in addition, meeting schedules and minutes are available on CPC's section of the village website. These are reviewed periodically.

5.10 Meeting the laid down timetables when responding to consultation invitations.

- Every effort is made to meet specified timetables when responding to consultation invitations.

5.11 Proper document control.

- Paperwork is retained in accordance with national guidelines and is available for viewing during office hours.

5.12 Register of members' interests and gifts and hospitality in place, complete, accurate and up to date.

- The Clerk holds the members' register of interests and WBC holds a copy. It is the responsibility of members to notify the Clerk of changes. The register is reviewed by the Clerk on annual basis.

Internal Controls

5.13 Regular scrutiny of financial records and proper arrangements for the approval of expenditure.

- Comprehensive measures are in place for the internal and external approval of expenditure.

5.14 Recording in the minutes the precise powers under which expenditure is being approved.

- See Section 4

5.15 Regular returns to the Inland Revenue; contracts of employment for all staff, annually reviewed by CPC, systems of updating records for any changes in relevant legislation.

- Inland Revenue returns are to be completed by the Clerk on a quarterly basis. Salaries are calculated by the Clerk and checked by the Chair of Finance and during internal audit. Staffing issues are referred to Council's Staffing Committee.

5.16 Regular returns of VAT.

- The Clerk as RFO is responsible for VAT returns and these are reviewed by CPC periodically (through delegation to the Chair of Finance or other delegated Councillor(s)). CPC checks that the RFO receives adequate training in all financial matters that relate to council business.

5.17 Developing system of performance measurement.

- Staff appraisals are undertaken by the Clerk, with the Clerk's being undertaken by the Chair of Council, and then the recommendations are reviewed by the staffing committee, which consists of at least five councillors including the Chairman (ex-officio). These are reported to the appropriate Committee.

5.18 Minutes properly numbered and paginated with a master copy kept in safekeeping.

- All Council and Committee minutes are correctly numbered and page numbered. These are loose leaf and signed copies are stored at the Public Record Office in Reading. They are also stored electronically and backed up remotely regularly.

5.19 Documented procedures to deal with enquiries from the public.

- Calls and letters are dealt with as soon as practicable unless referred to council or committee. In such cases, acknowledgement of enquiry is made.

5.20 Documented procedures to deal with responses to consultation requests.

- Consultation requests are referred to Council. They may be further delegated to a working group. The course of action taken is minuted. Copies of responses are available to all members on request.

5.21 Documented procedures for document receipt, circulation, response, handling and filing.

- The Clerk receives all mail (except correspondence relating to lettings, which is received by the Assistant Clerk). All relevant mail is listed with council or a committee for consideration or for information. Mail for action by the Clerk is dealt with accordingly and filed when actions are completed.

5.22 Procedures in place for recording and monitoring members' interests, and gifts and hospitality received.

- It is a members' responsibility to inform the clerk of any interests, gifts or hospitality as laid down in the Standing Orders and Code of Conduct.

5.23 Adoption of Codes of Conduct for members and employees.

- The Council adopted the Wokingham Borough Coucil Code of Conduct on 13th December 2021. Employees Code of Conduct is in accordance with their individual contracts of employment. At present there is no other statutory code for employees.

Internal Audit Assurance

5.24 Review of internal controls in place and their documentation.

- Internal controls are reviewed as necessary by the Clerk and Internal Auditor. Recommendations from the Clerk and Internal Auditor are reviewed by the Finance Committee and are submitted to full Council for approval.

5.25 Review of minutes to ensure legal powers in place, recorded and correctly applied.

- See Section 4

5.26 Testing of income and expenditure from minutes to a recognised accounts package, from bank statements to the accounts package, from minutes to statements etc.

- The testing of these procedures forms part of the internal controls currently in place. The system is also tested during the audit process and the Amenities internal audit.

5.27 Review and testing of arrangements to prevent and detect fraud and corruption.

- The system and controls laid down in Standing Orders is reviewed on a regular basis to check it is robust. No expenditure, transfers or disposal of assets can be made without the signature of two Councillors recorded in the appropriate approved signatory list in line with the Financial Regulations.

5.28 Testing of specific internal controls and reporting findings to management.

- Where appropriate, the results of such testing, as part of the internal controls will be reported to the appropriate committee or council. Similar reporting to Council will be made as part of the internal audit.

5.29 Computer data safety.

- The Finance and Payroll systems are both with external cloud-based providers. All staff should use the cloud storage provided by Windows 365. The Council will align its procedures with the NALC cyber security guide. Council has moved to Gov.uk domain, via an approved provider, who provide cyber security guidance. The new website is secure.

6 Amenities Risk Assessment Procedures

6.1 Health and Safety Risk Assessment

- This is reviewed and updated annually.

6.2 Fire Risk Assessment

- A Fire Risk Assessment and associated action plan is undertaken, reviewed and updated annually by the Amenities Committee Fire extinguishers undergo a certified annual check. A fire alarm system and automated door closer system has been in place since 2016, with appropriate service intervals.

6.3 Amenities Risk Assessments

6.4 Risk assessments for all facilities have been thoroughly reviewed in 2025 and will be reviewed annually. A risk assessment will be carried out prior to any Parish Council run event. Given the recent sink hole, this should be covered in the Amenities Risk assessment, and recorded along with the survey results from WBC.

7 Review

7.1 This policy will be reviewed annually.

8 Appendix

List of Risk Assessments for Amenities reviewed each year

Defibrillator Machines

East Park Farm Facilities

St Patrick's Recreation Ground

Margaret Gimblett Pavilion

Charvil Village Hall

Legionella – both buildings

Council Scheme of Delegation

The Councils Scheme of Delegation authorises the Clerk to the Council (Proper Officer)/Responsible Finance Officer to act with delegated authority in the specific circumstances detailed.

1. DISCHARGE OF THE SCHEME

1.1 This Scheme of Delegation forms part of the Council's governance documents along with Standing Orders Financial Regulations and the Code of Conduct. The Scheme will be reviewed at least every two years and when there are staffing changes.

1.2 Those with delegated responsibility are referred to by job title, Parish Clerk (Proper Officer)/Responsible Financial Officer.

1.3 One of the purposes of the document is to clearly define the parameters within which the Officers of the Council are able to act without reference to Councillors. Where consultation with others is a requirement of the ability to act it is clearly set out with whom that consultation should take place.

1.4 Any deviation from this scheme should be reported to Council at the earliest opportunity with an explanation of the circumstances in which the breach occurred.

1.5 The other purpose of the document is to capture the various delegated powers throughout the Council.

2. PRINCIPLES OF DELEGATION

2.1 Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides:

- That a Council may delegate its powers (except those incapable of delegation) to a committee; or an officer.
- A Committee may delegate its powers to an officer.
- The delegating body may exercise Powers that have been delegated.

2.2 Any delegation to the Proper Officer shall be exercised in compliance with the Council's Standing Orders, any other policies or conditions imposed by the Council and with the law.

2.3 In an emergency the Proper Officer is empowered to carry out any function of the Council.

2.4 Where the Parish Clerk is contemplating any action under delegated powers, which is likely to have a significant impact in a particular area, they should also consult the Chairman of the Council and must ensure that they obtain appropriate legal, financial and other specialist advice before action is taken.

3. AUTHORITY TO ACT

3.1 It will be appropriate for the Parish Clerk to refer a matter to the Council where the determination of the matter is likely to be particularly controversial or raises issues of policy which it would be appropriate for councillors to determine; or could, by its scale or complexity expose the Council to major corporate risk.

3.2 The Parish Clerk and Committees have the responsibility to act within the Council's approved policies, procedures and framework and within the law in conjunction with this delegated scheme.

4 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

4.1 Under the Local Government Act 1972, section 117 the Parish Clerk must make a formal declaration about council contracts where they have a financial interest.

4.2 Where the Parish Clerk has a conflict of interest in any matter, the Clerk shall not participate in that matter unless approved by the Council and this is formally recorded in the Council minutes.

5 COUNCIL RESERVED POWERS

5.1 The following matters are only to be resolved by the Full Council:

• Appointment of the Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer and any other council officers

• To adopt and change the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Scheme of Delegation and other Council policies

• To approve and adopt the Policy Framework.

• To approve and adopt the Budget.

• To adopt the schedule of meetings for the ensuing year.

• To determine matters involving expenditure for which budget provision is not made or is exceeded.

• To set the Precept.

• To make byelaws.

• To borrow money.

• To annually approve the statutory annual

6 DELEGATIONS TO PARISH CLERK

6.1 Parish Clerk

1. The Parish Clerk is designated and authorised to act as the Proper Officer for the purposes of all relevant sections of the Local Government Act 1972 and any other stature requiring the designation of a proper officer.

2. To take action on any issue of such urgency, that it cannot wait until the next normal Council meeting. If circumstances permit, the Clerk would normally be expected to consult the Chairman or Vice Chairman if the Chairman is unavailable and take his/her view into account

3. In the case of an emergency, the Clerk shall have the power to take reasonable steps to secure the Council's assets or position, following consultation with the Chair of Council (if practicable in the circumstances).

4. To 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 £750

5. Power to authorise relevant training courses provided the expense can be met from approved budgets having taken into account the training needs of the employees.

6. Power to act immediately on all Health and Safety or emergency issues without waiting for endorsement by the Full Council

7. To take any action regarding minor repairs (up to a cost of £750) and to report minor matters to the relevant authority.

8. As Proper Officer, to sign all documents on behalf of the Council including the Summons to Elected Members to attend Council Meetings in accordance with paragraph 4 and Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act, 1972

9. To sign and publish the annual public notice that the Audit of Accounts is to take place and has taken place.

10. To receive members' acceptance of declarations of interest and their appointment as a Councillor.

11. Power to release press statements on any activities of the Council subject to prior consultation with the Chairman

12. Power to act on own initiative to implement the Councils policies and objectives.

13. Power to take appropriate steps to ensure the Council does not exceed its powers.

14. Power to manage all the Council's facilities and resources in accordance with the Council's policies.

15. In liaison and after conferring with the Chairman, to make such Civic arrangements as are necessary.

16. The Proper Officer shall be responsible for signing all the Council's Official Notices as set out in the Standing Orders.

Delegated actions shall be in accordance with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and in line with directions given by Council from time to time and shall be reported to the next available Council meeting.

6.2 Responsible Financial Officer.

17. The Responsible Financial Officer will be responsible for all financial records of the Council and the careful administration of its finances and accounting procedures in

accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations in force at any given time and with the policies and procedures set by the Council and within the law.

18. The Responsible Financial Officer will have the power to release any financial related report or document to the Council in discharge of the Responsible Financial Officer responsibilities.

19. The Responsible Financial Officer shall ensure the approved precept request is issued to the billing authority.

7. Delegated Powers re Planning

7.1 Delegation Planning applications shall be received by the Clerk who will provide details to Councillors and where no queries arise by joint decision of all Councillors, the Clerk shall be delegated to inform the Planning Department within the time allocated of the decision of the Council. All Councillors will report directly back to the Clerk, thereby avoiding discussion between members.

7.2 The Clerk may request an extension to the time period for response to enable the application to be discussed at a forthcoming Council Meeting, if the application warrants a wider discussion

7.3 Where queries arise the Chairman will call for a site meeting which may require an Extraordinary Meeting

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Guide to Information provided by Parish/Community Councils under the model publication scheme

This template guide is written for the use of Parish and Community Councils.

It gives examples of the kind of information the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) would expect you to provide in order to meet your commitment under the model publication scheme, introduced through the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). In 2008, the ICO introduced a generic model publication scheme, for adoption by all public authorities that are subject to FOIA.

The model publication scheme commits you to 'produce and publish the method by which the specific information will be available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public'.

The model publication scheme is available on the ICO website. Further details are available in ICO guidance: Using the definition documents.

You must adopt the model scheme in full, unedited and promoted alongside the guide to information. You do not need to tell the ICO that you have adopted the scheme; we will assume they have done so unless we hear otherwise.

You are in breach of FOIA if you have not adopted the model scheme or are not publishing in accordance with it.

Information included in the guide to information

The template lists the information that the ICO thinks you are likely to hold and should make proactively available within each class. When completed, this will provide a list of all the information you will routinely make available, explain how it can be accessed and whether or not a charge will be made for it. You must:

- complete the relevant columns in the template guide;

- state how an applicant can obtain the specific information and if there is a cost involved;
- ensure the public can access the completed guide and the information listed in it.

The ICO expects you to make the information in this template guide available unless:

- you do not hold the information;
- the information is exempt under one of the FOIA exemptions or Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) exceptions, or its release is prohibited by another statute (eg UK GDPR);
- the information is readily and publicly available from an external website; such information may have been provided by you or on your behalf. You must provide a direct link to that information;
- the information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible; or,
- it would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for routine release.

If the information is only held by another public authority, you should provide details of where to obtain it.

This guidance is not meant to give an exhaustive or definitive list of everything that should be covered by a publication scheme. The legal commitment is to the model publication scheme, and you should look to provide as much information as possible on a routine basis, which must include all information that is required by statute.

This guidance now incorporates those key principles, which were not already included, from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC, originally known as the Department for Communities and Local Government [DCLG]), Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. The aligning of this document with this Code provides a harmonised approach to data transparency for you and avoids unnecessary duplication

Publishing datasets for re-use

As a public authority, you must publish under your publication scheme any dataset you hold that has been requested, together with any updated versions, unless you are satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so. So far as reasonably practicable, you must publish it in an electronic form that is capable of re-use.

If the dataset or any part of it is a relevant copyright work and you are the only owner, you must make it available for re-use under the terms of a specified licence. Datasets in which the Crown owns the copyright or the database rights are not relevant copyright works.

The 2018 section 45 Code of Practice recommends that public authorities make datasets available for re-use under the Open Government Licence.

The term 'dataset' is defined in section 11(5) of FOIA. The terms 'relevant copyright work' and 'specified licence' are defined in section 19(8) of FOIA. The ICO has published guidance on Datasets (section 11, 19 & 45). This explains what is meant by "not appropriate" and "capable of re-use".

Fees and Charging

Information available through your publication scheme should be readily available at a low cost or at no cost to the public. If you do charge for this information, the ICO expects the charges to be justifiable, clear and kept to a minimum.

You can charge for activities such as printing, photocopying and postage as well as information that you are legally authorised to charge for. You must inform anyone requesting information of any charge before you provide the information. You must ask for payment before providing the information. Guidance on the ICO website provides more details about charging for information in a publication scheme.

If you charge a fee for licensing the re-use of datasets, you should state in the guide to information how this is calculated and whether the charge is made under the Re-use Fees Regulations or under other legislation. You cannot charge a re-use fee if they make the datasets available for re-use under the Open Government Licence.

Model Publication Scheme

The table below identifies the specific information the ICO expects you to publish under each of the seven classes of information set out in the model publication scheme.

Information available from (Charvil *Parish Council*) under the Freedom of Information Act model publication scheme

This template guide covers only information we currently hold. If we do not hold some of the information listed below, we will mark it as 'not held' in the table.

Information to be published	**How the information can be obtained**	**Cost**
Class 1 - Who we are and what we do (Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts) Current information only	(hard copy or website) Website	Nil
List of Council members and their responsibilities as well a list of Council Committees Details of any representation on local public bodies	Website Website	Nil Nil
Postal and email address Contact details for Parish Clerk and Council members Where possible, provide named contacts including contact phone numbers and email addresses	Website Website Website	Nil Nil Nil
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	N/A	
Staffing structure	Website	Nil

Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it (Financial information about projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit) Current and previous financial year as a minimum	(hard copy or website) Hard Copy and Website	Nil
Statement of accounts and internal audit report in the format included in the Annual Return form	Website	Nil
Finalised budget	Website	Nil
Precept	Website	Nil
Borrowing Approval letter	N/A	
All items of expenditure above £100	Website/hard copy	Nil
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Website	Nil
Grants given and received	Website	Nil
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Website/Hard Copy	Nil
Members' allowances and expenses	Website/hard copy	Nil
Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews) Current and previous year as a minimum	(hard copy or website) Audits – website Strategies – hard copy	Nil Nil
Annual governance statement in format included in the Annual Return form	Website	Nil
Parish Plan (Neighbourhood Plan)	Website	Nil

Annual Report to Parish or Community Meeting	Website	Nil
Quality status	N/A	
Local charters drawn up in accordance with DLUHC's guidelines	N/A	
Data Protection impact assessments (in full or summary format) or any other impact assessment (eg Health & Safety Impact Assessment, Equality Impact Assessments etc), as appropriate and relevant	Website	Nil
Class 4 – How we make decisions (Decision making processes and records of decisions) Current and previous council year as a minimum	(hard copy or website) Website Website	 Nil Nil
Timetable of meetings (Council and any committee/sub-committee meetings and parish meetings)	Website	Nil
Agendas of meetings (as above)	Website/hard copy	Nil
Minutes of meetings (as above) – exclude material that is properly considered to be exempt from disclosure	Website	Nil
Reports presented to council meetings – exclude material that is properly considered to be exempt from disclosure	Website/hard copy	Nil
Responses to consultation papers	Hard copy	Nil
Responses to planning applications	Website	Nil
Bye-laws	N/A	

Class 5 – Our policies and procedures (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities) Current information only	(hard copy or website) Website	Nil
Policies and procedures for the conduct of Council business: • Procedural standing orders • Committee and sub-committee terms of reference • Delegated authority in respect of officers • Code of Conduct • Policy statements	Website	Nil
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: • Internal instructions to staff and policies relating to the delivery of services • Equality and diversity policy • Health and safety policy • Recruitment policies and details of current vacancies • Policies and procedures for handling requests for information • Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	Website/hard copy	Nil
Records management, personal data and access to information policies Include information security policies, records retention, destruction and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing and CCTV usage) policies	Website/hard Copy	Nil

Class 6 – Lists and Registers Currently maintained lists and registers only.	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available by inspection)	
Information legally required to hold in publicly available registers (in most circumstances existing access provisions will suffice)	Website/hard copy	Nil
Assets register, including details of public land and building assets	Website	Nil
Disclosure log indicating the information provided in response to FOIA and EIR requests. These are recommended as good practice	Hard copy	Nil
Register of members' interests	Website	Nil
Register of gifts and hospitality	N/a	
Class 7 – The services we offer (Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses) Current information only	(hard copy or website; some information may only be available by inspection)	
Allotments	Website	Nil
Burial grounds and closed churchyards	N/A	
Community centres and village halls	Website	Nil
Parks, playing fields and recreational facilities	Website	Nil
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Website	Nil
Bus shelters	Website	Nil
Markets	N/A	
Public conveniences	N/A	
Agency agreements	N/A	
Services for which we are entitled to	Website	Nil

recover a fee and details of those fees (eg burial fees)		
Additional Information Information not itemised in the lists above		

Schedule of charges

This describes how the charges have been arrived at and should be published as part of the guide.

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ ..p per sheet (black & white)	Actual cost *
	Photocopying @ ..p per sheet (colour)	Actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2nd class
Statutory Fee		In accordance with the relevant legislation (quote the actual statute)
Other		

* the actual cost incurred

Parish Council Social Media Protocol

1. Purpose

To ensure the Parish Council's social media (primarily Facebook) is used to provide clear, timely, and accurate information for engaging residents, while remaining consistent with agreed Council decisions whilst enabling Councillors to engage.

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2. Management and Access

- The **Clerk** is responsible for overall account management **(or nominated officer)**
- Posting access to official Parish Council accounts is limited to:
  - **Clerk**
  - **Approved administrator**
  - **The Chair (or Vice-Chair)** supports approval of sensitive content
  - **One nominated councillor** (if required)
- No other councillor may post on behalf of the Council without prior agreement

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3. Content Approval Framework

  - **Green** – Routine (Post directly) - **Clerk or Approved administrator**
  - Agendas, minutes, meetings
  - Community notices and events
  - Service updates (e.g. closures, maintenance)
- **Amber** – **Clerk Review (or one nominated councillor)**
  - Updates on ongoing local issues (e.g. highways, development, flooding)
  - Anything that could reasonably be misinterpreted or challenged
  - Partnership activity or external liaison
- **Red – Clerk + Chair Approval (or one nominated councillor)**
  - Complaints or criticism involving the Council
  - Planning matters attracting significant resident interest
  - Financial decisions, asset use, or disputes
  - Any issue likely to generate substantial public reaction
  - Emergencies or incidents

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4. Individual Councillor Use of Social Media

- **Councillors may use personal social media accounts to:**
  - Share information on local matters
  - Engage with residents and community groups
  - Express personal, political, or campaigning views
  - Comment on issues where no formal Parish Council position has been agreed
- **However, councillors should:**
  - Make clear they are speaking in a personal or individual capacity
  - Avoid implying they speak for the Parish Council unless authorised
  - Respect confidentiality and the Councillors Code of Conduct and the Parish council communications and Social media policy.
  - Avoid bringing the Council into disrepute through inappropriate online behaviour

Where appropriate, councillors are encouraged to include wording such as:

"Views expressed are my own and not necessarily those of the Parish Council."

- **Councillors may also express views "as a Parish Councillor" where:**
  - They are speaking from their experience or role as an elected representative
  - The matter relates to local community interests or Parish business
  - It is clear the comments represent their individual view and not a formal Council decision
- **In these circumstances councillors should:**
  - Make clear when views are personal or individual
  - Avoid implying they speak on behalf of the Parish Council unless authorised to do so
  - Distinguish between:
    - an agreed Council position; and
    - their own views as an elected councillor
  - Respect confidentiality, the Code of Conduct, and legal obligations

Where appropriate, councillors are encouraged to include wording such as:

"I am commenting in my capacity as a Parish Councillor, however these are my own views and not necessarily those of the Parish Council."

Councillors remain free to discuss, challenge, and advocate on local matters in their role as elected representatives, provided the distinction between personal views and formal Council positions remains clear.

5. Official Council Position

- Posts on official Parish Council accounts must reflect agreed Council decisions or policies
- Where relevant, reference the meeting/date of the decision
- Where no agreed position exists:
    - Posts should remain factual and neutral
    - No individual opinion should be presented as a Council view

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6. Tone and Approach

Official Parish Council communications should remain:

- Clear, factual, and calm
- Helpful and community-focused
- Neutral and non-partisan

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7. Standard Responses

- Holding statement:
  "The Parish Council is aware of this issue and will provide an update in due course."
- Consideration statement:
  "This matter will be considered at a future Parish Council meeting."
- Decision update:
  "At its meeting on [date], the Parish Council agreed to…"
- Redirect:
  "For formal enquiries, please contact the Clerk at [email]."

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8. Handling Comments

- Comments are monitored but not actively debated by the Council
- The Council may respond to straightforward factual queries
- The Council will not engage in prolonged arguments or political discussion
- Councillors remain free to discuss, challenge, and advocate on local matters

Comments may be removed if they are:

- Abusive, defamatory, or offensive
- Misleading or knowingly false
- Irrelevant or spam

Persistent offenders may be blocked.

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9. Urgent Communications

- For urgent local matters, the Clerk should liaise with the Chair (or nominated Councillor) before posting where possible
- If immediate communication is required, a neutral holding statement should be issued until further information is confirmed

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10. Record Keeping

- Screenshots or brief records should be retained for sensitive or high-profile posts
- Retain an approval record for sensitive posts
- Significant posts should align with Council record-keeping requirements

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