

Sawbridgeworth Town Council



Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth
Hertfordshire CM21 9AN
Tel: 01279 724537

e-mail: info@sawbridgeworth-tc.gov.uk
web: www.sawbridgeworth-tc.gov.uk

MAYOR
Cllr Greg Rattey
TOWN CLERK
Christopher Hunt

To: Cllrs Alder, E Buckmaster, R Buckmaster, Rider, Parsad,
[Cllr Rattey]

FINANCE, POLICY and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

You are invited to a meeting of this committee of the Council which will take place on **Monday 12th September 2022** at 8:00pm at Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth for the transaction of the following business.

Town Clerk
6th September 2022

Agenda

- F 22/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
[👏] To receive and approve any apologies for absence
- F 22/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
To receive any Declarations of Interest by Members
- F 22/14 MINUTES**
[👏][📄] To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance, Policy and Economic Development Committee held on 13th June 2022 (F01)
[Attached]

To attend to any matters arising from these Minutes and not dealt with elsewhere on this Agenda.
- F 22/15 STAFF MATTERS**
To consider any matters relating to members of staff.
- Staff appraisals
 - Clerk CiLCA qualification update
 - Bus Drivers update
 - Ranger's update
- F 22/16 FINANCE MATTERS**
To consider any matters relating to the finances and year end arrangements of the Council.
- To update with any updates on the external audit from PKF Littlejohn.

- F 22/17 TOWN MARKET**
To update on progress on the arrangements for the Town Market
- F 22/18 JUBILEE GARDENS**
[a] To receive an update on the Jubilee Gardens
Cllr R Buckmaster, Town Clerk
- F 22/19 COUNCILLOR ENGAGEMENT**
To discuss engagement opportunities for councillors
- F 22/20 COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION**
[a]
 - To discuss the introduction of a promotional website linked to the current STC website to promote activities and locations to visit in the town with the domain name 'Enjoy Sawbridgeworth'
 - To update Councillors on meeting with Central Surgery Patients Group.
Verbal update, Town Projects Manager
- 22/21 POLICY MATTERS**
To consider any matters relating to policies for the future development of Town Council services to the community.
[a]
[b]
[c]
 - To approve the draft document 1.7.1 Corporate Structure
 - To approve the draft risk management policy
 - To approve the draft STC Financial Regulations
- F22/22 GREATER ANGLIA STATION ADOPTION SCHEME**
To receive an update on the adoption of the local railway station
Cllr Angus Wyatt
- F 22/23 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**
To consider any items for inclusion on future agendas.

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCE, POLICY and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee held at the Chamber, Sayesbury Manor, Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth at 8:30pm on **Monday 13th June 2022**.

Those present

Cllr Angela Alder

Cllr Eric Buckmaster

Cllr Ruth Buckmaster

In attendance:

Christopher Hunt - Town Clerk

Cllr Nathan Parsad

Cllr John Rider

Cllr David Royle

F 22/01 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr E Buckmaster was elected Chairman of the Committee for the year 2022/23. *[prop Cllr A Alder; secd Cllr Parsad]*

F 22/02 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Parsad was elected Vice Chairman of the Committee for the year 2022/23. *[prop Cllr R Buckmaster; secd Cllr A Alder]*

F 22/03 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

F 22/04 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest by Members

F 22/05 MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 11th April 2022 (F04) Cllr Alder pointed out a typing error in regards to the number of Ranger applications as it read 2 and should state 4. This was corrected.
[prop Cllr Alder; secd Cllr R Buckmaster]

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Economic Development and STAP Committee held on 14th March 2022 (E05)
[prop Cllr Parsad secd Cllr Alder]

F 22/06 STAFF MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to members of staff.

- HR and H&S support has now moved over to Citation and has been a positive move with better support and a money saving from the previous supplier.

F 22/07 FINANCE MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to the finances and year end arrangements of the Council

- To advise members of the visit of the Internal Auditor on 8th June 2022.
 - The internal auditor report had been received and was circulated in hard copy to members at the meeting. The Internal Audit was good and the Clerk wanted it recorded his thanks for the excellent work by Mrs Dale, the internal auditor would now complete the necessary page of the AGAR in preparation for full council on the 27th June 2022.

- To advise members of the arrangements for External Audit by PKF Littlejohn.
 - Plan to keep to the traditional timetable and get approval at the full council meeting on 27th June 2022, following adoption, this will be posted off to PKF Littlejohn by special delivery to arrive before their deadline date.
- To advise members of the draft Annual Return for 2021/22.
 - Members agreed with the draft copy that had been circulated, members agreed that the AGAR be presented for adoption to full council.

F 22/08 TOWN MARKET

The Clerk explained the project had stalled due to other work impacts and will be back on track when the Town Project Manager returns from leave.

Question

- Cllr Royle asked if the council are supplying a community stall, the Clerk stated it would be a good platform for councillor engagement and share information.
- Cllr R Buckmaster asked if charity stalls could be considered as previously, they were given an option to set up food and drink stalls to raise money. The Clerk will liaise with the Projects Manager.

ACTION – members wanted a date set to start of the market, the Clerk will liaise with the Project manager to complete this action.

F22/09 POLICY MATTERS

To consider any matters relating to policies for the future development of Town Council services to the community.

Energy providers update from the Clerk as EDF had pulled out of the contract for 2023/2024 and another provider was being sought but the current situation was difficult.

F22/10 GREATER ANGLIA STATION ADOPTION SCHEME

Cllr Angus Wyatt explained the project and that no cost was levelled with at the Town Council and funding would be from Greater Anglia and local sponsors to ensure safety, cleanliness and make the station welcoming and assist in steering people into the town to use local businesses. It will have a positive impact on sustainable travel, involve local groups and schools

Cllr Rider wanted it recognised the good work the current staff complete at the station as could be seen over the Jubilee weekend.

Resolved, Project to be proposed to full council
[prop Cllr Parsad secd Cllr Alder]

F 21/11 ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

To consider any items for inclusion on future agendas.

Cllr Alder requested a future agenda item was placed for engagement with the new residents and local agencies and support groups.

Meeting Closed at 9:05pm

Town Green Working Party Minutes

26th May 2023

In attendance - Christopher Hunt - Town Clerk
Joanne Sargent – Events Manager
Cllr Angela Alder
Cllr Eric Buckmaster
Cllr Ruth Buckmaster
Cllr David Royle
Gilly Squire
Steve Higham

Apologies – Cllr Annelise Furnace
Hazel Mead
David Mead

JS. Explained the survey responses.

- 700 responses had been received to the survey, only 2 under 18's had been recorded.
- Multi use space wanted
- Plants placed by local groups
- Keep as a community space and not fixed usage
- Children to take on ownership of spaces
- Picnic areas were a divided option
- Heritage appears to be important

RB. Stated an overwhelming response was to name the gardens 'Jubilee Gardens' followed by Elm Green.

RESOLVED Name the area JUBILEE GARDENS
[Proposed Angela Alder, Seconded Gilly Squire]

EB. Raised the positives around sculptures in the gardens which had worked well in other areas such as Pishiobury Park

GS. Wanted lighting if fitted to be down lights to prevent light pollution

AA. Asked regarding the condition of the wall

RB. Responded the recent survey revealed the lime trees were making the wall unsafe and needed to be removed.

GS. Raised her concerns in an opening in the wall making it dangerous due to children running in to the road.

RB. Stated a safety gate or guardrail could be used as other parks.

SH. Raised concerns changing the wall dimensions due to the conservation area.

EB. Stated the safety of the wall was paramount and an alternative such as a living wall could be an option.

RB. Next Steps for consideration

- Biodiversity survey
- Lighting
- Not too crowded with different areas
- Produce a quiet and tranquil location
- May Pole location

Town Green Working Party Minutes

26th May 2023

- Space for community events

EB. Can the current hedge near to the doctors be incorporated into the design?

GS. Perhaps shaped into a caterpillar design

GS. Wildflower turf may offer a short-term option to start the planting and then search for longer term options.

ACTION – JS, RB and CH to look at local design park and open space projects and approach the college to assess option for designers and ideas.

Appoint a designer to allow for a business case to be developed to present to EHDC to seek permission to proceed.

Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Paper from the Town Projects Manager

Introduction

With the growing population of the town, additional housing and new people moving in, it is essential that we re-visit how we communicate most effectively with our parishioners and visitors to the town. Whilst there are other options to digital is by far the leading source of communication in the modern world we live in.

Background – Current STC Website

The current town council website is now 9 years old. Following a meeting with Rubber Cheese in July, Laura Carter and Jo Sargant explored the potential of the current website moving forwards versus a new website. Our website is built on an open source platform known as Expression Engine. Although Rubber Cheese designed the website back in 2013 there are no ongoing maintenance costs to the town council. We have invested small amounts of budget over the years to keep it current, but now feel that it requires some aesthetic updates to improve the visitor experience in terms of navigation, these updates should be achievable with the current budget provision for 2022/2023. It is especially essential that our website can be viewed correctly on a handheld device. Rubber Cheese have put us in contact with a website developer who has been approved to evaluate our current website and address items on a 'wish list' from officers. Our website is our digital notice board where essential information about what we do is displayed such as agendas, minutes and financial information.

Background – New 'Enjoy Sawbridgeworth' Website

During the research exercise, officers felt that the Hertford Town Council website was a good example of a local government website that was easily navigated. They also noted that they have a separate website (large icon link on the front page) to a website that is dedicated to tourism etc. Since creating our website in 2013 we have held the 2 following domain names at a minimal cost.

enjoysawbridgeworth.co.uk £20 +vat (renewal for 2 Years)

enjoysawbridgeworth.com £40+vat (renewal for 2 Years)

Do councillors now consider that this is an appropriate time to explore the cost of a similar website as 'Go Hertford' using the domain names above as an addition to the town council website? Would councillors like officers to research further the cost implication of this? We would of course bespoke the website with other headings, for example we do not have a 'sleep' element to the town with no hotels etc. this could therefore be a 'Walk' heading. We could also utilise this website for our 'Eco' work and other new initiatives that we will develop over the coming years. We are approaching the budget setting period and in November we will be preparing the 2023/2024 budget, so it is essential that if desired a new website is included in this budget.

Sawbridgeworth Town Council Paper from the Town Projects Manager

gohertford.co.uk

Home | Sawbridge... | STC Login | Robots... | Atlas - The C... | NABMA | Shadowfax - Mana... | Querie... | Tell Us Once service... | Brief Lives Remember... | Shadowfax | Sawbridgeworth (H...

Visit | Map | News | Promotions | Free WiFi

Go Hertford

Explore Shop Taste Do Sleep Events

Visit the beautiful historic town
Explore what's on offer.

Hertford has a rich history, a wealth of shops, restaurants, attractions and events for local residents and visitors.

Stay informed with our weekly events newsletter.

gohertford.co.uk

Home | Sawbridge... | STC Login | Website... | Atlas - The C... | NABMA | Shadowfax - Mana... | Courts | Tell Us Once service... | Brief Lives Remember... | Shadowfax | Sawbridgeworth (H...

Tweet us @HertfordTC

Follow us on Instagram

Go Explore

Go Shop

Go Taste

Go Do

Go Sleep

Go Events

Latest from **Go Hertford**

Website & Communication Paper 220906 JLS Town Project Manager



Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Document 1.7.1

CORPORATE STRUCTURE

(Helping to improve services)

To be amended by F,P & EDC Committee 12th September 2022
To be approved by Council 26th September 2022

MISSION STATEMENT

'To provide an accountable, valued and quality service to the community'

OBJECTIVES

1. To promote working partnerships for the benefit of the community
2. To communicate, consult and engage
3. To provide services that are accountable, transparent and value for money
4. To be recognised as a quality employer
5. To preserve and promote the town's unique heritage and environment

FULL COUNCIL

Full Council has responsibility for dealing with matters of strategic importance to the town and for dealing with matters which by law, it must do.

Membership: 12 Quorum: 4 Frequency of Meetings: monthly (*Not August or December*)

1. To elect a Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor
2. To approve the annual precept demand
3. To approve accounts for payment
4. To make appointments to committees
5. To make appointments and nominations to outside bodies
6. To approve the Review of Internal Audit procedures
7. To approve the Annual Accounts in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations
8. To appoint internal and external auditors
9. To approve recommendations on the annual review of Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
10. To deal with matters of a strategic nature
11. To respond to consultative documents from Government and other bodies other than those specifically allocated to Committees or Sub-Committees
12. To consider matters referred to it by Committees or Sub-Committees

COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Committees may exercise delegated functions on behalf of the Town Council under the following terms of reference, subject to:-

- The Town Council's approved Budget and Financial Regulations;
- Any previous minuted decision of the Town Council.
- Any matters reserved to the Town Council by law.

FINANCE POLICY and ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Finance Policy and Economic Development Committee is the main policy making Committee of the Council and provides the strategic direction of the Council including future provision of new services. It is responsible for ensuring the Council follows statutory proper practices in the management of the council's finances, achieves accountability, transparency, value for money and quality.

Membership: 6 + 2 ex-officio Quorum: 3 Frequency of Meetings: bi-monthly

Membership eligibility: By appointment by Full Council taking account of aptitude or experience

Terms of Reference

1. To guide the Council in the formulation of its objectives.
2. To identify the need for new services and facilities.
3. To be responsible for allocating and controlling the financial resources of the Council including carrying out a quarterly financial review.
4. To advise the Council on the distribution of functions between Committees and Sub-Committees and any major policy changes in the Council's management or administrative procedures.
5. To consider the financial estimates of the Council and recommend the precept to be levied.
6. To make recommendations regarding the annual review of Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
7. To carry out and make recommendations to Council following the annual Review of Internal Audit procedures including the Governance and Management Risk Register and

to recommend the appointment of the Internal Auditor to Council

8. To be responsible for the Council's Capital Management Plan and longer term financial and business plans including Corporate Structure.
9. To be responsible for the collection of all revenue, the raising and renewal of loans (for recommendation to Council) and insurance.
10. To be responsible for the banking, financial and accounting methods adopted by the Council.
11. To annually review tenancies, hire charges and burial fees.
12. To respond to consultative documents from Government and other bodies other than those specifically allocated to other Committees or Sub-Committees (where a Full Council meeting does not fall within the consultation period).
13. To implement new policies and annually review rules and regulations and policies (excluding those relating to Council as an employer).
14. To enter into legal proceedings on the Council's behalf including overseeing and review of agency agreements.
15. To consider the delegation of appropriate services to the Town Council from other authorities.
16. To develop a communication strategy including the use of social media, to oversee use of same and to oversee management and development of the Council's website and quarterly newsletter
17. To deal with matters not normally dealt with or specifically referred to other Committees or Sub-Committees.
18. To develop an economic development strategy for the town, in consultation with local businesses and residents.
19. Within the limits of the Council's powers and responsibilities and its approved budget to authorise actions to fulfil the above objectives

PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Planning Committee considers proposed development in the Parish and immediate surrounding area, responding to planning applications as a consultee, relevant consultations and supporting the development of a Neighbourhood Plan.

Membership: 6 + 2 ex-officio

Quorum: 3

Frequency of Meetings:

Twice each month

Membership eligibility:

By appointment by Full Council

Terms of Reference

1. To consider all planning aspects of development within the Parish.
 2. To consider all matters affecting the Parish infrastructure.
 3. To consider and monitor Development Plans and associated documents.
 4. To provide or delegate representation at Planning Authority Committee meetings, Inquiries and Appeals.
 5. To make recommendations regarding street naming within the Parish.
 6. To respond as consultee to any planning application or any consultation document relating to planning in the Parish.
-

TOWN ACTION PLAN and AMENITIES COMMITTEE

This Committee monitors the operation of all Town Council properties and amenities, ensuring a high standard of provision. It considers their further development and the development of other facilities. The Committee is responsible for protecting the environment, promoting biodiversity, maintaining valued spaces, providing quality facilities and working in partnership with other organisations to achieve these objectives. The committee has authority for managing the budget allocation for its areas of responsibility.

Membership: 6 + 2 ex-officio Quorum: 3

Frequency of Meetings: bi-monthly

Membership eligibility: By appointment by Full Council

Terms of Reference

1. To work in partnership with other organisations for the benefit of provision or improvement of existing and future facilities and services.
2. To promote the development and good management of leisure facilities in the town.
3. To manage the use, maintenance and improvement of West Road Play area.
4. To manage and develop the Farmers market

5. To act as responsible landlords for sites owned by the Town Council and leased to other organisations for management including the Hailey Centre.
6. To support and investigate the provision of youth facilities and services in the town.
7. To manage the use, maintenance and improvement of the Council Offices
8. To manage the provision and upkeep of Three Mile Pond Cemetery
9. To develop and maintain floral schemes in the town on land owned and/or managed by the Town Council and to encourage and support other organisations in doing so elsewhere in the town.
10. To oversee the responsible management and maintenance of all trees in the Town Council's areas of responsibility.
11. To manage markets in the town including the Farmer's Market and to encourage and support other markets.
12. To maintain the War Memorial.
13. To support the Allotment Association in managing the provision and upkeep of allotments.
14. To review and update the Sawbridgeworth Town Action Plan (STAP) and facilitate greater participation by Sawbridgeworth residents in the updating process.
15. Areas of Responsibility
 - Initiating actions to meet the objectives of the STAP
 - Reviewing and updating the STAP in consultation with residents
 - Amending the STAP to take account of the impact of the East Herts District Plan
 - Reporting on the STAP at the Annual Town Meeting
 - Developing a strategy for the Economic Development of the town in consultation with local businesses and residents.

APPOINTMENTS AND APPRAISALS COMMITTEE

The Appointments and Appraisals Committee is responsible for all aspects of management of human resources including setting of policies, training and development of councillors and staff, grading and conditions of service.

Membership: 3 Quorum: 2 Frequency of Meetings: as and when required

Membership requirements: specialist knowledge in human resources, policies, staff management, training and development

Terms of Reference

- a. To consider and make recommendations regarding the Council's staffing structure.
- b. To determine the employment, welfare, pension, remuneration, recruitment, training, qualifications, health and safety aspects and other conditions of service of all employees.
- c. To determine those discretionary provisions contained in the scheme of Service of the National Joint Council for Local Authorities.
- d. To undertake the Town Council's responsibilities in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
- e. To determine and approve the establishment and grading of employees for the administration of the Council.
- f. To develop an effective training policy for all staff and Councillors and to monitor same.
- g. To approve job descriptions for all Staff.
- h. To oversee the recruitment of Council staff as necessary.
- i. To create any new policies deemed necessary for the proper management and care of Council employees, whether obligatory or not.
- j. To ensure the Town Council is compliant and up to date with all relevant UK legislation and EU Directives.
- k. To monitor/review all aspects of paperwork pertaining to HR matters and suggest areas for improvement.
- l. To monitor and review staff appraisals, ensuring action plans are developed and monitored.
- m. To monitor and review staff performance against targets such as time or finance.
- n. To review and suggest any areas where succession management may be a possibility.

DELEGATION

General

Where powers or duties have been delegated to a Committee, that Committee may in turn assign functions or delegate powers and duties to the Town Clerk or a Sub-Committee, provided that any action taken under delegated powers by the Town Clerk or a Sub-Committee shall be reported to the next meeting of the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee for information.

A committee may set up a working group to investigate, consider and report back with recommendations on any issue.

Any power or duty which is delegated under this scheme is subject to Town Council policy and the approved budget and may also be exercised by the Town Council or any Committee which has delegated or further delegated that power or duty.

Town Mayor's powers

The Town Clerk may, in consultation with the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor, on the Council's behalf deal with, decide or take action on such matters as will not admit of delay, subject to a report indicating such action being submitted to the next meeting of Council.

Chairman's powers

- The Town Clerk may, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of a Committee or Sub-Committee, on that Committee's or Sub-Committee's behalf deal with, decide or take action on such matters within the Committee's or Sub-Committee's terms of reference as will not admit of delay, subject to a report indicating such action being submitted to the next meeting of the appropriate Committee or Sub-Committee.
- That the above be taken to include the Mayor in the absence of either the Chairman or Vice-Chairman.

Delegation to the Town Clerk

Specific Delegations

The following list of delegations to the Town Clerk may, from time to time, be further delegated to the Council's officers at the discretion of the Town Clerk.

1. To be and carry out the functions of the Proper Officer under the Local Government Act 1972; to arrange and call meetings of the Town Council and its Committees and Sub-Committees; and to implement decisions thereof.
2. The general management of the Council's services in accordance with the policies determined from time to time by the Council and its Committees, including dealing with correspondence and handling complaints and requests for information.
3. The initiation of new arrangements and revision of existing arrangements for the improved management of Council establishment providing the estimated cost has been included in the current revenue budget.
4. The determination of the use of existing office accommodation, the purchase of equipment and the authorisation of repairs and maintenance to all buildings and equipment within the financial limit of the current revenue budget.
5. The appointment, management, development, appraisal and discipline of employees within the Council's approved establishment.
6. The delegation of staff to attend courses, seminars etc. Relevant to their position with the Council subject to a six-monthly report to the Appointments and Appraisals Committee.
7. The exercise of virements within a Committee's budget, according to need.
8. Any action necessary in an emergency to protect the Council's property or assets or minimise its liabilities, subject to consultation where practicable with the Mayor or Deputy Mayor and to report back to the next appropriate Council meeting.

Further Delegations

The Council may from time-to-time further delegate action to the Town Clerk or to the Town Clerk in consultation with the appropriate Committee Chairman. Such delegation will be clearly minuted and revised accordingly.

Delegations to the Responsible Financial Officer

- To carry out the functions of the Responsible Financial Officer under the Local Government Act 1972 s151, including the maintenance of the Council's accounts, arrangements for internal audit and the preparation of budget estimates for the forthcoming year;
- To make arrangements to pay the salaries and wages of employees of the Council.

DRAFT



Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Policy 6.6

Risk Management Policy

To be approved by F,P & EDC Committee 12th September 2022
To be approved by Full Council 26th September 2022

INTRODUCTION

- Risk is the threat that an event or action will adversely affect the Town Council's ability to achieve its stated aims and objectives and to successfully execute its services. Risk management is the process by which risks are identified, evaluated and controlled. It is a key element of the framework of governance together with community focus, structures and processes, standards of conduct and service delivery arrangements¹.

- Sawbridgeworth Town Council recognises that it has a responsibility to manage risks effectively in order to protect its employees, assets liabilities and community against potential losses, to minimise uncertainty in achieving its aims and objectives and to maximise the opportunities to achieve these aims.
- The Town Council is aware that some risks can never be eliminated fully and it has in place a strategy that provides a structured, systematic and focussed approach to managing risk to ensure that risk management is an integral part of the Town Council's management processes.

1. Objectives

The objectives of the Town Council's risk management policy are to:-

- Integrate risk management into the culture of the Town Council
- Manage risk in accordance with best practice
- Anticipate and respond to changing social, environmental and legislative requirements
- Prevent loss, minimise disruption, damage and injury and reduce the cost of risk, thereby maximising resources
- Inform policy and operational decisions by identifying risks and their likely impact
- Raise awareness of the need for risk management.

These objectives will be achieved by:

- Establishing clear roles, responsibilities and reporting lines within the Town Council for risk management
- Providing opportunities for shared learning on risk management across the Town Council.
- Providing risk management training and awareness sessions
- Incorporating risk management considerations into the Town Council's management processes e.g. project management, Business Continuity Planning
- Effective communication with, and the active involvement of officers
- Monitoring arrangements on an on-going basis

1. Audit Commission - Worth the Risk: Improving Risk Management in Local Government (2001: 5)

1.2 Responsibility for Risk Management

1.2.1 The Town Council recognises that it is the responsibility of all Councillors and officers to have regard for risk in carrying out their duties. If uncontrolled, risk can result in a drain on resources that could better be directed to front line service provision, and to the meeting of the Town Council's objectives and community needs.

1.2.2 This policy has the full support of the Town Council which recognises that any reduction in injury, illness, loss or damage benefits the whole community. The co-operation and commitment of all employees is required to ensure that Town Council resources are not wasted as a result of uncontrolled risk.

2. RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

2.1 This document forms Sawbridgeworth Town Council's Risk Management Policy. It sets out:

- What is risk management;
- Why the Town Council need a risk management policy;
- What is the Town Council's philosophy on risk management;
- What is the risk management process
- How will risk management feed into the Council's existing policies
- Implementation timetable;
- Roles and responsibilities;
- Future monitoring

2.2 The objectives of this strategy are to:

- Further develop risk management and raise its profile across the Town Council;
- Integrate risk management into the culture of the Town Council;
- Embed risk management through the ownership and management of risk as part of all decision making processes; and
- Manage risk in accordance with best practice.

3. WHAT IS RISK MANAGEMENT?

3.1 Risk management is an essential feature of good governance. An organisation that manages risk well is more likely to achieve its objectives. It is vital to recognise that risk management is not simply about health and safety and business continuity, but applies to all aspects of the Council's work.

3.2 Risks can be classified into various types but it is important to recognise that for all categories the direct financial losses may have less impact than the indirect costs such as disruption of normal working. The examples below are not exhaustive:

Strategic Risk - long-term adverse impacts from poor decision-making or poor implementation. Risks damage to the reputation of the Council, loss of public confidence, in a worst case scenario Government intervention.

Compliance Risk - failure to comply with legislation or laid down procedures or the lack of documentation to prove compliance. Risks exposure to prosecution, judicial review, employment tribunals, inability to enforce contracts.

Financial Risk - fraud and corruption, waste, excess demand for services, bad debts. Risk of additional audit investigation, objection to accounts, reduced service delivery, dramatically increased Council Tax levels/impact on Council reserves.

Operating Risk - failure to deliver services effectively, malfunctioning equipment, hazards to service users, the general public or staff, damage to property. Risk of insurance claims, higher insurance premiums, lengthy recovery processes.

3.3 Not all these risks are insurable and for some the premiums may not be cost effective. Even where insurance is available, a monetary consideration may not be an adequate recompense. The emphasis should always be on eliminating or reducing risk before costly steps to transfer risk to another party are considered.

3.4 Risk is not restricted to potential threats but can be connected with opportunities. Good risk management can facilitate proactive, rather than merely defensive responses. Measures to manage adverse risks are likely to help with managing positive ones.

4. WHY DOES THE TOWN COUNCIL NEED A RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY?

4.1 Risk management will strengthen the ability of the Town Council to achieve its objectives and enhance the value of services provided.

4.2 The Risk Management Policy will help to ensure that the whole Town Council has an understanding of risk and that the Town Council adopts a uniform approach to identifying and prioritising risks. This should in turn lead to conscious choices as to the most appropriate method of dealing with each risk, be it elimination, reduction, transfer or acceptance.

4.3 Strategic risk management is also an integral part of the Town Council's commitment to best practice and continual improvement and a requirement of Internal and External Financial Auditing.

4.4 There is a requirement under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 to establish and maintain a systematic strategy, framework and process for managing risk. Risks and their control will be collated in a Risk Register. A statement regarding the system of internal control and the management of risk will be included as part of the Annual Statement of Accounts.

What is the Council's philosophy on Risk Management?

4.5 Risk Management Policy Statement

Sawbridgeworth Town Council recognises that it has a responsibility to manage risks effectively in order to protect its employees, assets, liabilities and community against potential losses, to minimise uncertainty in achieving its goals and objectives and to maximise the opportunities to achieve its vision.

The Town Council is aware that some risks can never be eliminated fully and it has in place a strategy that provides a structured, systematic and focussed approach to managing risk. Risk management is an integral part of the Town Council's management processes.

4.6 What is the Risk Management Process?

4.7 Implementing the Strategy

Risk Identification – Identifying and understanding the hazards and risks facing the Town Council is crucial if informed decisions are to be made about policies or service delivery methods. The risks associated with these decisions can then be effectively managed. All risks identified will be recorded in the Town Council's Risk Register.

Risk Analysis – Once risks have been identified they need to be systematically and accurately assessed using proven techniques. Analysis should make full use of any available data on the potential frequency of events and their consequences. If a risk is seen to be unacceptable, then steps need to be taken to control or respond to the risk.

Risk Prioritisation – An assessment should be undertaken of the impact and likelihood of risks occurring, with impact and likelihood being scored Low (1), Medium (2) and High (3). The scores for impact and likelihood are added together. Risks scoring 4 and above will be subject to detailed consideration and preparation of a contingency/action plan to appropriately control the risk

5. RISK CONTROL

5.1 Risk control is the process of taking action to minimise the likelihood of the risk event occurring and/or reducing the severity of the consequences should it occur. Typically, risk control require the identification and implementation of revised operating procedures, but in exceptional cases more drastic action will be required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Options for control include:

Elimination – the circumstances from which the risk arises are removed so that the risk no longer exists;

Reduction – loss control measures are implemented to reduce the impact/likelihood of the risk occurring;

Transfer – the financial impact is passed to others e.g. by revising contractual terms;

Sharing – the risk is shared with another party;

Insuring – insure against some or all of the risk to mitigate financial impact;
And

Acceptance – documenting a conscious decision after assessment of areas where the Council accepts or tolerates risk.

5.2 Risk Monitoring

The risk management process does not finish with putting any risk control procedures in place. Their effectiveness in controlling risk must be monitored and reviewed. It is also important to assess whether the nature of any risk has changed over time.

The information generated from applying the risk management process will help to ensure that risks can be avoided or minimised in the future. It will also inform judgements on the nature and extent of insurance cover and the balance to be reached between self-insurance and external protection.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT AND EXISTING TOWN COUNCIL POLICIES

6.1 The initial identification of risks will be achieved by managers and supervisors compiling a list of the risks in their service area(s) which will be integrated into a comprehensive Council Risk Register.

6.2 Best Value – although Best Value no longer applies to the Town and Parish Councils the principles remain sound and a good demonstration of best practice as they present a significant opportunity for the Town Council to reassess its objectives and the threats to achieving these objectives. The Town Council will build risk management procedures into the way that it operates as part of a commitment to quality and continuous service improvement. As part of any review process the strategic and operational risks associated with the service under review will be assessed. Recommendations for risk control will be reported to the relevant Committees for approval.

6.3 Projects and Service Changes – managers and supervisors developing projects or recommending changes to services will ensure that risks are identified and the measures to eliminate or control risks are documented in agenda reports to be considered by the relevant committee.

6.4 Partnership Working – the Town Council will continue to enter into a number of partnerships with organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors where necessary. Some of these organisations may not have the same sensitivities to the risks that the Town Council sees as important. Part of the process of setting up future partnerships will be to ensure that all relevant risks are identified and that appropriate control mechanisms are built into the management arrangements for the partnership.

6.5 Business Continuity Planning – the Town Council will use information gleaned from the regular reviews of its key risks to inform and shape the business continuity plan which aims to ensure that the Town Council's vital functions are able to continue during a period of severe disruption such as loss of buildings, equipment or staffing.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 It is important that risk management becomes embedded into the everyday culture and performance management process of the Town Council. The roles and responsibilities set out below, are designed to ensure that risk is managed effectively right across the Town Council and its operations, and responsibility for risk is located in the right place. Those who best know the risks to a particular service are those responsible for it. The process must be driven from the top but must also involve staff throughout the organisation.

7.2 **Elected Members** – risk management is seen as a key part of the Elected Members' stewardship role and there is an expectation that Elected Members will lead and monitor the approach adopted, in a similar way to existing monitoring of issues such as financial risk management and event risk assessment. This will include:

Risk Management Policy – 6.6

1. Approval of the Risk Management Policy;
2. Analysis of key risks in reports on major projects, ensuring that all future projects and services undertaken are adequately risk managed;
3. Consideration, and if appropriate, endorsement of the Annual Statement of Internal Control as required for External Audit; and
4. Assessment of risks whilst setting the budget, including any bids for resources to tackle specific issues.

7.3 Managers and Supervisors – will act as the risk assessors for each section, assisting with identifying all risks in their section and the compilation of the Risk Register. They will manage risk effectively in their particular service areas or projects and report how threats and risks have been managed to the Town Clerk. This includes identifying, analysing, prioritising, monitoring and reporting on service risks and any control actions taken.

Specific duties relating to individual officers are detailed in paras. 7.4, 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7 below

7.4 Town Clerk – will act as the Lead Officer on Risk Management and be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the detail of the Risk Management Policy. The Town Clerk will:

1. Provide advice as to the legality of policy and service delivery choices;
2. Provide advice on the implications for service areas of the Council's corporate aims and objectives;
3. Update the Council and sections on the implications of new or revised legislation;
4. Assist in handling any litigation claims;
5. Provide advice on any human resource issues relating to strategic policy options or the risks associated with operational decisions and assist in handling cases of work related illness or injury;
6. Advise on any Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 implications of the chosen or proposed arrangements for service delivery;
7. Report progress to Full Town Council via the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee; and
8. Ensure that Risk Management is an integral part of all annual reviews of the Constitution and setting of aims and objectives, including recommendations for risk control highlighted in reports presented to relevant Committees.

7.5 Responsible Finance Officer – as the Town Council's section 151 Officer the Finance and Administration Manager will:

1. Assess and implement the Council's insurance requirements;
2. Assess the financial implications of strategic policy options;
3. Provide assistance and advice on budgetary planning and control;
4. Ensure that the financial systems approved by the Town Council allow effective budgetary control; and
5. Effectively manage the Town Council's investment and loan (where applicable) portfolio in accordance with the Treasury Management Policy.

7.6 Managers and Supervisors – as 6.3 above

7.7 Employees – will undertake their job within risk management guidelines ensuring that their skills and knowledge are used effectively. All employees will maintain an awareness of the impact and costs of risks and how to feed data into the formal process. They will work to control risks or threats within their jobs, monitor progress and report on job related risks to their manager or supervisor.

7.8 Role of Internal Audit – Internal Audit provides an important scrutiny role by carrying out audits to provide independent assurance to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee that the necessary risk management systems are in place and all significant business risks are being managed effectively. Internal Audit will work with External Audit to achieve the aim of assisting the Town Council in identifying both its financial and operational risks and seeks to assist the Town Council in developing and implementing proper arrangements to manage them, including adequate and effective systems of internal control to reduce or eliminate the likelihood of errors or fraud. Internal Audit reports, and any recommendations contained within, will help to shape the Annual Statement of Internal Control and assist the programme of External Audit.

7.9 Finance, Policy and Economic Development Committee – Review and oversee the implementation of the Risk Management Policy and compilation of the Risk Register.

7.10 Training – Risk Management training will be provided to Elected Members, and officers through a variety of mediums. The aim will be to ensure that both Elected Members and staff have the skills necessary to identify, evaluate and control the risks associated with the services they provide.

7.11 In addition to the roles and responsibilities set out above, the Town Council is keen to promote an environment within which individuals/groups are encouraged to report adverse incidents promptly and openly. To assist with this aspect, the Town Council has developed a 'whistleblowing' policy.

8. FUTURE MONITORING

8.1 Review of Risk Management Policy - This Policy will be reviewed on a 2 yearly basis as part of the Town Council's continuing review of its Constitution. Recommendations for change will be reported to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee. The date of the next review will be in 2015.

8.2 The Risk Register will be regularly reviewed and updated. This will be undertaken by the Town Clerk and reported to Finance, Policy and Administration Committee. New risks will emerge and need to be controlled. Feedback from Internal and External Audit can identify areas for improvement, as can the sharing of best practice via professional bodies, the National Association of Local Councils and relevant local council forums.

8.3 Reporting on Progress – The Town Clerk will present an annual report to the Finance, Policy and Administration Committee detailing progress on risk management over the year and providing a summary of the Risk Register.

9 CONCLUSION

Risk Management Policy – 6.6

9.1 The adoption of a sound risk management approach should achieve many benefits for the Town Council. It will assist in demonstrating that the Town Council is committed to continuous service improvement and effective corporate governance.

10. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

10.1 In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this document will be posted on the Town Council's Website as part of the Constitution and copies of this document, the Risk Management Policy and the Risk Register will be available for inspection at the Council Offices.





SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

**To be amended by F,P & EDC Committee 12th September 2022
To be approved by Council 26th September 2022**

Annexes Attached as follows:

Annex A – Responsible Financial Officer Duties and Responsibilities
Annex B – Treasury Management Policy
Annex C – Financial Management Strategy

Final Draft Review
Sawbridgeworth Town Council

Financial Regulations

1. General

- 1.1 These financial regulations govern the conduct of the financial transactions of the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders.
- 1.2 The Clerk, as the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) appointed by the Council
- 1.3 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), under the Policy direction of the Council, shall be responsible for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs, allowing that delegation to other members of staff is necessary. The RFO's duties and responsibilities are detailed at Annex A to these Financial Regulations.
- 1.4 Deliberate or wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary procedures.
- 1.5 In these financial regulations and any annex, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations or 'the regulations' shall mean the regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and then in force unless otherwise specified.
- 1.6 In these financial regulations and any annex the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England - a Practitioners' Guide issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

2. Annual Estimates

- 2.1 The Finance, Policy and Economic Development Committee together with each Standing Committee shall formulate and submit proposals to the Council in respect of Revenue and Capital costs for the following financial year not later than the end of November each Year.
- 2.2 The Finance, Policy and Economic Development Committee shall receive the proposed budgets of all other Standing Committees before the full Budget is presented for adoption by the Council and shall make recommendations to the Council regarding adoption or otherwise.
- 2.3 The Council shall review the Budget not later than the end of January 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.
- 2.4 The annual Budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year

3. Budgetary Control

- 3.1 Expenditure on the revenue account may be incurred up to the amounts included in the approved budget.
- 3.2 No expenditure may be incurred which cannot be met from the amounts provided in the appropriate revenue budget unless a virement has been approved by the Council.

- 3.3 The RFO shall provide The Finance, Policy and Economic Development Committee and the Council with a quarterly statement of Income and Expenditure under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure against the Budget.
- 3.4 The Town 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 £3,000.
- 3.5 Where expenditure is incurred in accordance with regulation 3.4 above and the sum required cannot be met from savings made elsewhere within the Council's approved budget, it shall be subject to the provisions of a supplementary estimate approved by the Council.
- 3.6 Unspent provisions in the Revenue budget shall be carried forward to a subsequent year by approval of the RFO
- 3.7 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving expenditure on capital account unless the Council is satisfied that it is contained in the rolling capital programme and that the necessary capital funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval can be obtained.
- 3.8 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 RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.
- 4.2 The RFO shall be responsible for ensuring completion of all accounts of the Council as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and submission to the Council, and The Finance, Policy and Economic Development Committee for approval by resolution no later than 30 June each year.
- 4.3 The RFO shall be responsible for ensuring that there is an independent, 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 appears to the RFO or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit and shall supply the RFO or Internal Auditor with such information and explanation as the RFO or Internal Auditor considers necessary for that purpose.
- 4.4 An Internal Auditor, who shall be competent and independent of the operations of the Council, shall be appointed by the Council. The Internal Auditor will report to the Council in writing as required.
- 4.5 For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as is described in proper practices.
- 4.6 The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts including the opportunity for inspection of the accounts, books, and vouchers required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 4.7 The RFO 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 nature.

5. Banking Arrangements and Cheques

- 5.1 The Council's banking arrangements shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council, banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.
- 5.2 A schedule of the payment of money shall be prepared by the RFO and together with the relevant invoices etc. presented to the Council at every regular meeting of the Council. If the schedule is in order it shall be authorised by a resolution of the Council.
- 5.3 Cheques drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule referred to in Paragraph 5.2 shall be signed by any 2 members from the signature list. Due to the fact that the possibility exists for Councillors with aligned personal or commercial interests to sign the same cheque, the Council will not appoint members of the same family to sign cheques.
- 5.4 To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payments the signatories shall each also sign the schedule presented with the cheques for signature.

6. Payment of Accounts

- 6.1 The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments and all payments shall be effected by cheque or other instruction to the Council's bankers.
- 6.2 If a payment is necessary to be made to avoid a charge of interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, or required under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, the Town Clerk/RFO may take all necessary steps to settle such invoices.
- 6.3 If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to Council as made.
- 6.4 If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or internet banking transfer provided that the instructions for each payment are signed, or otherwise evidenced, by two authorised bank signatories, are retained and any payments are reported to Council as made.
- 6.5 No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the Council.
- 6.6 The Council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.
- 6.7 Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.8 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and coded by the Clerk, who shall satisfy him/herself that the work, goods or services to which the invoice relates shall have been received, carried out, examined and approved.
- 6.9 The Accountant shall scrutinise invoices in relation to arithmetical accuracy and

coding shall post them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The Town Clerk shall approve the invoices for payment.

- 6.10 The RFO shall maintain a Petty Cash float not exceeding £500 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.
- 6.11 Income received must not be paid into the Petty Cash Float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
- 6.12 Payments to maintain Petty Cash Float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to Council as detailed in paragraph 5.2 above.

7. Payment of Salaries

- 7.1 The payment of 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. All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.

8. Loans and Investments

- 8.1 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and in accordance with the Council's Investment and Financial Management Strategy, which is attached hereto at Appendix B.
- 8.2 The Council's Investment Policy shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practice and guidance and shall be reviewed on a regular basis.
- 8.3 All investments and 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 the necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose.
- 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 The Council will review all fees and charges annually, following a report by the RFO or other relevant officer.
- 9.3 All sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the Council and shall be written off in the year. Any bad debts amounting to less than £250 may be written off by the RFO but reported to the Council at the next appropriate meeting. The Council will review all fees and charges annually, following a report of the RFO.
- 9.4 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all income shall be deposited with the Council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.

- 9.5 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council
- 9.6 The RFO shall ensure that any VAT Return that is required is promptly completed. Any repayment claims due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made quarterly.
- 9.7 Where any significant sums of cash are received by the Council, the RFO shall take such steps as are necessary to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, 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 A Purchase Order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.
- 10.2 A member may not issue a purchase order or make any contract on behalf of the Council.
- 10.3 All members and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order is to 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 Standing Orders 33 and 38 and any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11 below.

11. Contracts

- 11.1 Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:
- 11.1.1 Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations and no exceptions shall be made other than in an emergency as described at Regulation 3.5 provided that these Regulations shall not apply to contracts which relate to items 1 to 5 below.
1. For the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services.
 2. For specialist services such as provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants.
 3. For work to be executed, or goods/materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant.
 4. For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council.
 5. For goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed price.
- 11.1.2 Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 ("the Regulations") which is valued at £25,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations¹
- 11.1.3 The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)²
- 11.1.4 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.

- 11.1.5 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.
- 11.1.6 All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of the appointed members acting as a Tender sub Committee, which shall consist of at least 3 members of the Council. Those present shall sign and date a list of those tenders received.
- 11.1.7 Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Orders 33 and 38 and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 11.1.8 When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3000 and £1000 or above, the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Where the value is between £3000 and £4999 3 verbal quotes may be obtained with file notes. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.
- 11.1.9 If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £3000 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.
- 11.1.10 The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 11.1.11 Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken

1 The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts.

2 For contracts commencing on or after 1 January 2020 the thresholds are:

- contracts for works: £4,733,252
- contracts for supplies and services: £189,330

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.
- 12.2 Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case when it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding fluctuation clauses, will exceed the contract sum by 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 RFO in writing, the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13 Stores and Equipment

- 13.1 The RFO shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment.
- 13.2 Delivery notes must be obtained in respect of all goods received and must be checked as regard quality at the time delivery is made.

14. Properties and Estates

- 14.1 The RFO shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds of properties owned by the Council and 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 purposes for which held.
- 14.2 No property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, save where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £500.
- 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.

15. Insurance

- 15.1 The RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.
- 15.2 The RFO will deal with all new risks which require to be insured and any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 15.3 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances affected 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 any event likely to lead to a claim.
- 15.5 All appropriate employees of the Council shall be included in suitable fidelity guarantee insurance.

16 Charities

- 16.1 Where the Council is the sole Trustee of a Charitable body the 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 RFO shall arrange for any Audit or Independent Examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

17. Revision of Financial Regulations

It shall be the duty of the Council to review the Financial Regulations of the Council from time to time. The RFO 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.

Mayor of Sawbridgeworth

Town Clerk and RFO