Corsham
TOWN COUNCIL

Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Terms of Reference

(Effective from 10 March 2026)

Part One: Standing Orders

These Standing Orders were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on 8 March 2021 and most recently updated at its meeting on 9 March 2026.

1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

1.1 Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chair of the meeting.

1.2 A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.

1.3 A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the Chair of the meeting as withdrawn.

1.4 If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.

1.5 An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.

1.6 If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.

1.7 An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the Chair of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the Chair.

1.8 A Councillor may move an amendment to their own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.

1.9 If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chair.

1.10 Subject to standing order 1.11 below, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chair of the meeting.

1.11 One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chair of the meeting considers this expedient, but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.

1.12 A Councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.

1.13 The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.

1.14 Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of

the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate of the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.

1.15 Unless permitted by the Chair of the meeting, a Councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:

i. to speak on an amendment moved by another Councillor;
ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since they last spoke;
iii. to make a point of order;
iv. to give a personal explanation; or
v. in exercise of a right of reply.

1.16 During the debate of a motion, a Councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the Councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A Councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which they consider has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting by which they are concerned.

1.17 A point of order shall be decided by the Chair of the meeting and their decision shall be final.

1.18 When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:

i. to amend the motion;
ii. to proceed to the next business;
iii. to adjourn the debate;
iv. to put the motion to a vote;
v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
vii. to exclude the public and press;
viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory requirements.

1.19 Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the Chair of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived their right of reply.

1.20 Excluding motions moved under standing order 1.18, the contributions or speeches by a Councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed three minutes without the consent of the Chair of the meeting.

2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

2.1 No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the Chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.

2.2 If person(s) disregard the request of the Chair of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any Councillor or the Chair of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.

2.3 If a resolution made under standing order 2.2 is ignored, the Chair of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. MEETINGS GENERALLY

3.1 Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.

3.2 The minimum three clear days public notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a public holiday, a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.

3.3 Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.

3.4 During the agenda item designated for Public Question Time and Petitions, members of the public may ask questions, make representations, submit petitions, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of matters relevant to the Council or Committee.

3.5 Questions, representations or petitions at Council (Planning) Meetings must be relevant to a specific item/s on the agenda.

3.6 The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3.4 shall not exceed 10 minutes unless directed by the Chair of the meeting.

3.7 Subject to standing order 3.6, a member of the public shall not speak for more than three minutes.

3.8 In accordance with standing order 3.4, a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

3.9 A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The Chair of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.

3.10 A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the Chair of the meeting.

3.11 Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the Chair of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.

3.12 Subject to standing order 3.13, a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To 'report' means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.

3.13 A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.

3.14 The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.

3.15 Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chair of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chair of the Council.

3.16 The Chair, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chair if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.

3.17 Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors or Councillors with voting rights present and voting.

3.18 The Chair of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise their casting vote whether or not they gave an original vote.

See standing orders 5.8 and 5.9 below for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chair of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.

3.19 Voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a Councillor prior to the vote being taken, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each Councillor present and voting gave their vote for or against that question.

3.20 The Minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

i. the time and place of the meeting;
ii. the names of Councillors present and those who had sent apologies;
iii. interests that have been declared by Councillors and non-Councillors with voting rights;
iv. whether a Councillor or non-Councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters in which they held interests were being considered;

v. if there was a public participation session; and
vi. the resolutions made.

3.21 A Councillor or a non-Councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's Code of Conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on their right to participate and vote on that matter.

3.22 No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council or committee, as appropriate, are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.

3.23 If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.

3.24 A meeting shall not exceed a period of three hours.

4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

4.1 Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee, which may also be known as a working group or steering group, whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.

4.2 The members of a committee may include non-Councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.

4.3 Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.

4.4 The Council may appoint standing committees or sub-committees as may be necessary, and:

i. shall determine their terms of reference;
ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of full Council;
iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4.2 and 4.3, appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
v. may, subject to standing orders 4.2 and 4.3, appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer at least three days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the Chair and Vice-Chair of the standing committee;

vii. shall permit a sub-committee to appoint its own Chair at the first meeting of the committee;
viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of any committee, which shall be no less than three;
ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required;
xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
xii. may dissolve a committee or sub-committee.

5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

5.1 In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new Councillors elected take office.

5.2 In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.

5.3 If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 7.00pm.

5.4 In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least six other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.

5.5 The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council.

5.6 The Chair of the Council, unless they have resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.

5.7 The Vice-Chair of the Council, if any, unless they resign or become disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chair of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.

5.8 In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chair of the Council has been elected. The current Chair of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

5.9 In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the meeting until a new Chair of the Council has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

5.10 Following the election of the Chair of the Council and Vice-Chair of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the business of the annual meeting shall include:

i. Confirmation of the accuracy of the Minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
ii. Receipt of the Minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
iii. Appointment of members to existing committees;
iv. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;
v. Appointment of representatives to external bodies; and
vi. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future.

6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

6.1 The Chair of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.

6.2 If the Chair of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two Councillors, any two Councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two Councillors.

6.3 The Chair of a committee or a sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or the sub-committee at any time.

6.4 If the Chair of a committee or a sub-committee does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested by to do so by two members of the committee or the sub-committee, any two members of the committee and the sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee and a sub-committee.

7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

7.1 A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least three Councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9; or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee; or if fresh information becomes available that, in the opinion of the Council, justifies further consideration of the matter.

7.2 When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7.1 has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

8.1 Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled

by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the Chair of the meeting.

9. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER

9.1 A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and, in any event, shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

9.2 No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least seven clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.

9.3 The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9.2, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.

9.4 If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9.2 is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer so that it can be understood at least five clear days before the meeting.

9.5 If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chair of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.

9.6 The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.

9.7 Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.

9.8 Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE

10.1 The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:

i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft Minutes of a meeting;
ii. to move to a vote;
iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;

v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
viii. to require a written report;
ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
xii. to not hear further from a Councillor or a member of the public;
xiii. to exclude a Councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
xvii. to close the meeting.

11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

See also standing order 20.

11.1 The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.

11.2 The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or, if this is not possible, the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).

11.3 The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the Minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.

11.4 Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.

12. DRAFT MINUTES

12.1 If the draft Minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on Councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.

12.2 There shall be no discussion about the draft Minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft Minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10.1i.

12.3 The accuracy of draft Minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall

be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the Minutes relate.

12.4 If the Chair of the meeting does not consider the Minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the Minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

"The Chair of this meeting does not believe that the Minutes of the meeting of the ( ) held on [date] in respect of ( ) were a correct record but their view was not upheld by the meeting and the Minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings."

13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

See also standing order 3.21.

13.1 All Councillors and non-Councillors with voting rights shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.

13.2 Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a Councillor or non-Councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.

13.3 Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a Councillor or non-Councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have another interest if so required by the Council's Code of Conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.

13.4 Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.

13.5 A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer and that decision is final.

13.6 A dispensation request shall confirm:

i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.

13.7 Subject to standing orders 13.4 and 13.6, a dispensation request shall be considered by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.

13.8 A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13.5 if, having regard to all relevant circumstances, any of the following apply:

i. without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
ii. granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or
iii. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

14.1 Upon notification by the Unitary Council that a Councillor or non-Councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's Code of Conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.

15. PROPER OFFICER

15.1 The Proper Officer shall be the Chief Executive or other staff member(s) nominated by them or the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.

15.2 The Proper Officer shall:

i. at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee,
   - serve on Councillors, by delivery or post at their residences, or by email authenticated in such a manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit (provided the Councillor has consented to service by email), a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda and
   - provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda. (Provided, in the case of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by Councillors, that the public notice is signed by them).
ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a Councillor has given written notice at least one day before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it;
iii. convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office;
iv. facilitate inspection of the Minute book by local government electors;
v. receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;
vi. hold Acceptance of Office records signed by Councillors;
vii. retain access to a copy of every Councillor's register of interests;
viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer;

x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed *(see also standing order 23);*
xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority;
xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chair or, in their absence, the Vice-Chair of the Council within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary Council (Planning) meeting;
xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
xvii. retain custody of the stamp of the Council which shall only be used for its proper purpose *(see also standing order 23).*

16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

16.1 The Chief Executive shall undertake the role of the Responsible Financial Officer. The Head of Finance and Administration will undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer in their absence.

17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

17.1 "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Practitioners' Guide - Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England".

17.2 All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.

17.3 The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each ordinary meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee a report to summarise:

i. the Council's aggregate income and expenditure for the year to date;
ii. the balances held at the end of the period being reported; and

which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year, highlighting any actual or likely overspends.

17.4 As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:

i. each Councillor with a statement summarising the Council's income and expenditure for the year to date for information; and
ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.

17.5 The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices, applying the income and expenditure form of accounts for a year to 31 March. A completed draft annual return shall be presented to each Councillor before the end of the following month of June. The annual return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

18.1 The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:

i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
iv. the inspection and copying by Councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
v. whether contracts with an estimated value below £30,000 due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.

18.2 Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.

18.3 Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:

i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting Councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
iii. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer. Alternatively, with prior approval of the Chief Executive, tenders shall be submitted electronically via email to the Chief Executive and Head of Finance and Administration, stating *Tender* and the nature of the works or services in the title bar.

iv. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
v. where appropriate, tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.

18.4 Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.

18.5 Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Government from time to time, the Council must consider whether the contract is subject to the requirements of the current procurement legislation and, if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.

19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

19.1 A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of the Council or the Finance and Administration Committee is subject to standing order 11.

19.2 Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Chief Executive shall notify another member of the Senior Management Team of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Chair.

19.3 Objective setting and reviewing of the Chief Executive shall be carried out by the Chair and Vice-Chair in accordance with the Council's policy.

19.4 Disciplinary and grievance matters shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy and as advised by the Council's appointed Human Resources (HR) Advisors.

19.5 Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.

19.6 In accordance with standing order 11.1, persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19.5.

20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

See also standing order 21.

20.1 In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.

20.2 The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.

21. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION

(Below is not an exclusive list)

See also standing order 11.

21.1 The Council shall appoint a Data Protection Officer.

21.2 The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data.

21.3 The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.

21.4 The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.

21.5 The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.

21.6 The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.

22. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA

22.1 Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its Councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

23. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS

See also standing order 15.2 xii and xvii.

23.1 A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.

23.2 Subject to standing order 23.1, any two Councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.

24. COMMUNICATING WITH UNITARY COUNCILLORS

24.1 Unless they have requested otherwise, a copy of the agenda for the monthly meeting of the full Council shall be sent to the Councillors of the Unitary Council representing the Corsham area.

25. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES

25.1 Unless duly authorised, no Councillor shall:

i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY

26.1 All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.

26.2 A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least two Councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.

26.3 The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a Councillor as soon as possible.

26.4 The decision of the Chair of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

Ref: C/djm/10032026 *March 2026*

Part Two: Financial Regulations

These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its meeting held on 9 March 2026.

1. General

1.1 These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. They are one of the Council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the Council's Standing Orders.

1.2 Councillors are expected to follow these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these Regulations brings the office of Councillor into disrepute.

1.3 Wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.

1.4 In these Financial Regulations:

- 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
- 'Approve' refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
- 'Authorise' refers to a decision by the Council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
- 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*
- *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel (SAPP) and published by NALC in England.
- 'Must' refers to a statutory obligation the Council cannot change.
- 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the Council to its members and staff.

1.5 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the Council. The Chief Executive has been appointed as RFO and these Regulations apply accordingly. The RFO:

- acts under the policy direction of the Council;
- administers the Council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
- determines on behalf of the Council its accounting records and control systems;
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed;

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

1.6 The Council must not delegate any decision regarding:

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

1.7 In addition, the Council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all Council bank accounts;
- authorise any grant in excess of £25,000.

2. Risk management and internal control

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

2.2 The Chief Executive shall prepare, for approval by the Finance and Administration Committee, a risk management policy covering all activities of the Council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the Finance and Administration Committee at least annually.

2.3 When considering any new activity, the Chief Executive shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the Council.

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

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

- ensure that risk is appropriately managed;
- ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;
- prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud;

- allow the reconstitution of any lost records;
- identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions, and
- ensure division of responsibilities.

2.6 At least once in each quarter, a Councillor shall verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The Councillor 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 Finance and Administration Committee or Council.

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

3. Accounts and audit

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

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

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

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

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

3.5 The Council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.

3.6 Any Officer or member of the Council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the

purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the Council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the Council considers necessary.

3.7 The internal auditor shall be appointed by the Finance and Administration Committee and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in The Practitioners' Guide.

3.8 The Council shall ensure that the internal auditor:

- is competent and independent of the financial operations of the Council;
- reports to Council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;
- can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
- has no involvement in the management or control of the Council.

3.9 Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

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

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

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

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

4. Budget and precept

4.1 Before setting a precept, the Council must calculate its Council Tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in

accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.

4.2 Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually in January for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Chief Executive.

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

4.4 Unspent funds for partially completed projects may be carried forward by placing them in an earmarked reserve with the formal approval of the Finance and Administration Committee.

4.5 Each committee shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the Finance and Administration Committee not later than the end of November each year.

4.6 The draft budget with any proposals, including any recommendations for the committee use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the Finance and Administration Committee and a recommendation made to the Full Council.

4.7 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.

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

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

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

4.11 Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the Finance and Administration Committee or Council.

5. Procurement

5.1 Councillors 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 getting prices from several suppliers.

5.2 The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made.

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

5.4 For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation ("the Legislation"), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.

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

5.6 For contracts estimated to exceed £30,000 including VAT, tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.

5.7 For contracts estimated to exceed £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.

5.8 For contracts exceeding £5,000 excluding VAT the Chief Executive shall seek at least three fixed price quotes;

5.9 Where the value is between £1,000 and £5,000 excluding VAT, the Chief Executive shall try to obtain three estimates which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.

5.10 For smaller purchases, the Chief Executive shall seek to achieve value for money.

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

5.12 The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these Regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:

i) specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;

ii) repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;

iii) works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;

[1] The Regulations require Councils to use the Find a Tender website if they advertise contract opportunities and also to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they were advertised.

iv) goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.

5.13 When applications are made to waive this Financial Regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the Council or relevant committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.

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

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

- the Chief Executive, under delegated authority, for any items within the agreed budget.
- in respect of grants, a duly authorised committee within any limits set by Council and in accordance with any policy statement.

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

5.16 No individual Councillor, or informal group of Councillors may issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Council.

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

5.18 In cases of serious risk to the delivery of Council services or to public safety on Council premises, the Chief Executive may authorise expenditure of up to £20,000 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 Chief Executive shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

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

5.20 An official order shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.

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

6. Banking and payments

6.1 The Council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by at least two Councillors; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. Banking arrangements shall be reviewed at least annually for security and efficiency.

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

6.3 All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised before being certified by the RFO. Where the certification of invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a statement by the RFO that all invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO.

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

6.5 All payments shall be made by online banking/cheque, in accordance with a resolution of the Council, duly delegated committee, or a delegated decision by an Officer, unless the Council resolves to use a different payment method.

6.6 Not used.

6.7 Regular payments, such as those for utilities, shall be signed by two Councillors on each and every occasion when payment is made - to reduce the risk of duplicate payments.

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

6.9 The Chief Executive shall have delegated authority to authorise payments in the following circumstances:

i) any payments, apart from grants, within an agreed budget.

ii) 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 Chief Executive certifies 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.

iii) Fund transfers within the Council's banking arrangements up to the sum of £300,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Council.

6.10 The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the Council. The Council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be signed immediately below the last item by two Councillors. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the Minutes of that meeting.

7. Electronic payments

7.1 Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the Council shall identify a number of Councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process. The Chief Executive may be an authorised signatory, but no signatory should be involved in approving any payment to themselves.

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

7.3 No employee or Councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the Council or its banking, to anyone.

7.4 The Head of Finance and Administration or another designated member of staff shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be made available to the Chief Executive.

7.5 Not used.

7.6 Two authorised Officers shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.

7.7 Evidence shall be retained showing which Officers approved the payment online and a printout of the transaction, confirming that the payment has been made, shall be retained for audit purposes.

7.8 A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next Council meeting and included in the Minutes.

7.9 With the approval of the Council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by

variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed by two authorised Councillors.

7.10 Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS provided that each payment is approved online by two authorised Officers and evidence is retained for audit purposes.

7.11 If thought appropriate by the Council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed by two Councillors, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to Council when made.

7.12 Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the Chief Executive. 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 at least every two years.

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

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

8. Cheque payments

8.1 Cheques or orders for payment in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two Councillors and countersigned by the Chief Executive or other authorised Officer.

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

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

8.4 Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than 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.

9. Payment cards

9.1 Any Business Charge Card or similar issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Chief Executive and will also be restricted to a single

transaction maximum value of £500 unless authorised by Council or committee before any order is placed.

9.2 Not used.

9.3 Any corporate trade card account opened by the Council will be specifically restricted to use by the Chief Executive and authorised Officers and any balance shall be paid in full each month.

9.4 Personal credit or debit cards of Councillors or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.

10. Petty Cash

10.1 The RFO shall maintain a petty cash account of £300 and may provide petty cash to Officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.

i) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept, along with receipts to substantiate every payment.

ii) Cash income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these Regulations.

iii) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on any schedule of payments presented for approval.

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

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

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

11.3 Salary rates shall be agreed by the Council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Council or relevant committee.

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

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

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

11.7 Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the Finance and Administration Committee or Council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the Finance and Administration Committee or Full Council.

11.8 Before employing interim staff, the Council must consider a full business case.

12. Loans and investments

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

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

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

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

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

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

13. Income

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

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

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

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

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

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

13.7 Where significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the RFO shall ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

13.8 Any income that is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account.

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

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

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

15. Stores and equipment

15.1 The Head of Service of each service area shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment for that service.

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

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

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

16. Assets, properties and estates

16.1 The Chief Executive shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the Council.

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

16.3 The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually.

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

No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £5,000. In each case a written report shall be provided to Council with a full business case.

17. Insurance

17.1 The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered, reviewing these annually before the renewal date in conjunction with the Council’s review of risk management.

17.2 The Chief Executive shall give prompt notification to the Council’s insurers of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.

17.3 The Chief Executive shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the Finance and Administration Committee at the next available meeting. The Chief Executive shall negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.

17.4 All appropriate Councillors 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 Chief Executive.

18. Charities

18.1 Where the Council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Chief Executive 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 Chief Executive shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

19. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

19.1 The Council shall review these Financial Regulations at least annually and following any change of Chief Executive. The Chief Executive shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the Council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.

19.2 The Council or committee may, by resolution, 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 Councillors. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the Council to act unlawfully.

19.3 The Council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 1 - Tender process

1. Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Chief Executive 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 Chief Executive. 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.
3. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Chief Executive in the presence of at least one member of Council.
4. Alternatively, with prior approval of the Chief Executive, tenders shall be submitted electronically via email to both the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance and Administration, stating *Tender* and the nature of the works or services in the title bar.
5. Where an electronic tendering process is used, the two specific email accounts will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
6. Any invitation to tender issued under this Regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 18 and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
7. 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.

Part Three: Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on 9 March 2026.

Council (Planning) and Committee Terms of Reference from March 2026

1. COUNCIL (PLANNING)

Council (Planning) comprising of all Councillors will have responsibility for:

- Responding to consultations on planning applications, development control and the Wiltshire Local Plan
- Neighbourhood Planning
- Planning Policy
- Street Naming
- Dealing with Council matters that cannot be fitted into the normal cycle of Council meetings

2. FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

The Finance and Administration Committee comprising of nine Councillors will, on behalf of the Council, have responsibility for:

- Overall supervision of the Council finances.
- Oversight and supervision of activities of the Council not covered by the Full Council or other Committees.
- Recommending the Council Estimates and Precept and submitting them for approval to the Council.
- Council Staffing/HR matters
- Grants
- Town Council Office Services and ICT

- Staff and Councillor training and development
- Policy Consultation and Review

3. PROPERTY AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE

The Property and Amenities Committee comprising of nine Councillors will, on behalf of the Council, have responsibility for:

- Management, maintenance, improvement and generation of income from property and assets under Town Council control.
- Recommending charges and terms upon which use will be permitted.
- Council owned or managed buildings, property, allotments, wildlife, amenity and leisure sites
- Children's play areas
- Cemetery, closed churchyards and memorial sites
- Footpaths, bus shelters and street furniture
- Litter collection/street cleaning
- CCTV Operation
- Transport and Highways
- Asset Management Plan
- Grounds Maintenance and other service delivery contracts
- Public Realm

4. COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Community Services Committee comprising of nine Councillors will, on behalf of the Council, have responsibility for:

- Marketing and promotion
- Community Safety Initiatives
- Tourism Development, Visitor Services and Heritage
- Events and Festivals including Summer Fete and Christmas Lights Switch-on

- Corsham Youth Council and youth activities
- Health and Wellbeing Promotion
- 'In Bloom' competitions
- Town Centre promotion and business support
- Community Liaison, including MOD and BSU
- The Arts, creative and cultural activity
- Community Awards
- Supporting and encouraging sport and leisure groups
- Twinning
- Age-friendly Corsham

5. STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP

The Strategic Planning Group, comprising of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council, along with Chairs of Committees along with other Councillors as agreed by the Council. The Chair of the Group shall be the Council Chair. The Group will give advice and make recommendations on:

- Strategic Planning
- Forward Planning
- Communications (including overview of newsletter, website and social media)

6. ACCOUNTS SUB-COMMITTEE

The Accounts Sub-Committee shall meet prior to each Council meeting to check and verify the Town Council and Methuen (Town) Hall accounts and supporting documentation for approval and payment by the Council.

7. STAFFING PANEL AND APPEALS PANEL

The Staffing Panel and Appeals Panel shall meet in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedures of the Council. Each Panel shall consist of five members and shall not include the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Council.

Revisions

Revision	Minute no.	Effective Date
SO 18.1(v), 18.3, 18.4(iii) and 18.6. FR 11.1(b), (f) and (h), 11.1(k) 6.18 and 8.4.	F&A 23/15 and 151/15	09/11/15
SO 18.6, FR1.6, FR 6.4 and FR11 (11.1 a to k).	F&A 47/15 and 242/15	14/03/16
TOR 5	F&A 45/16 and 230/16	13/03/17
SO 18.6	F&A 49/17 and 259/17	12/03/18
Comprehensive revisions to standing orders, based on NALC Model Standing Orders 2018 (England), written June 2018.	76/18	09/07/18
Numbering corrected		17/07/18
Terms of Reference updated	256/19	13/05/19
Financial Regulations updated following NALC's revised model.	214/19	13/01/20
Terms of Reference updated	262/19	09/02/20
SO 18.3	F&A 17/20 and 83/20	08/03/21
SO 18.4, FR 11.1 (e and f)	43/21	14/06/21
SO 18.6	209/21	14/03/22
SO 18.1(v), SO 18.3, FR 11.19(b) and FR 11.1(h)	205/22	13/03/23
Chairman changed to Chair	44/23	12/06/23
SO 5.3 – meeting time changed	215/23	08/01/24
SO 18.6.1 and SO 18.6.2 – thresholds changed	261/23	11/03/24
Financial Regulations updated following NALC's revised model.	73/24	08/07/24
Reviewed by F&A – no changes	F&A 44/24	26/02/25
Reviewed by Council – no changes	250/24	10/03/25

Reviewed by F&A – minor updates Recommended to Council	F&A 07/25	18/06/25
Reviewed by Council following F&A	81/25	14/07/25
Reviewed by F&A – no changes	F&A 47/25	25/02/26
Reviewed by Council – no changes	282/25	09/03/26