

Briefing Note
Finance and Personnel Thursday 29th October 2020
Review of Financial Regulations

Recommendation – the recommendation is to amend Financial Regulations as follows to reflect the structure of the Parish Council and update in procedures/legislation.

Amend Clerk to Executive Officer and/or Duly Authorised Deputy throughout the document.

Increase spending limits as recommended below, the Parish Council's maintenance responsibilities have increased along with prices and the limits are no longer realistic.

2. Annual Estimates
Change the word "estimates" to "budgets"
3. Budgetary Control
Increase limit from £2,000 to £5,000 in an emergency.
4. Accounting and Audit
Change wording from "Annual Return" to "Annual Governance and Accountability Return"
5. Banking Arrangements and Cheques
Change signing authority from Clerk or Services Officer to Executive Officer or duly authorised Deputy.
6. Payment of Accounts
- 6.6 No requirement for the Chairman to hold a copy of all the passwords in a sealed envelope, the Parish Council's IT company can re-set if necessary and all other passwords can be held on the system securely and accessed following re-set proposal is to change Financial Regulations to reflect this as follows:

From:

"Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chairman of Council in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.

To:

The Parish Council's computers all require the use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s) for access. All other PINs or Passwords relating to the Parish Council are securely stored on the Executive Officer's and duly authorised Deputy's computers. A note shall be made of the re-set instructions, along with how to access the Parish Council's PINs/Passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chairman of Council in a sealed dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other councillors. After the envelope has been opened, in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all members immediately and formally to the next available meeting of the council. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.

6.13 increase spending limit from £500 to £1,000

11. Contracts

11.1 b) i) increase limit from £2,000 to £2,500

Remove line "such firms to be taken from appropriate approved list"

Add line "due diligence should be undertaken on each firm."

11. 1 b) iii) increase limit from £2,000 to £2,500

Remove the requirement for Chairman approval to allow officers to expedite work: amend paragraph to read:

"For expenditures of £2,500 or less in value the Executive Officer or duly authorised Deputy shall have executive power subject to budgetary provision."

V Woodhouse
October 2020