

# Financial Regulations

RESPONSIBLE COMMITTEE: P&F

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This is a policy/procedure document of Saltash Town Council to be followed by both Councillors and Employees.

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## **1. General**

- 1.1. These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Town Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Town Council. Financial Regulations are one of the Town Council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for councillors and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the Town Council's Standing Orders and any individual Financial Regulations relating to contracts.
- 1.2. The Town Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the Town Council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Town Council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3. The Town Council has established Financial Regulations for the governance and management of its finances and to meet the requirements of the audit and accountability regime in place at the time. These are attached as Appendix 5 of Standing Orders.
- 1.4. All payments by the Town Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Town Council's Financial Regulations.
- 1.5. The Town Council's proper practices will be in accordance with the most recent Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) guidance.
- 1.6. The Town Council's accounting control systems must include measures:
  - for the timely production of accounts;
  - that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money;
  - to prevent and detect inaccuracy and fraud; and
  - identifying the duties of officers.
- 1.7. These Financial Regulations demonstrate how the Town Council meets these responsibilities and requirements.

- 1.8. **At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the Town Council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.**

Deliberate or wilful breach of these Regulations by an employee may give rise to disciplinary proceedings.

- 1.9. Councillors are expected to follow the instructions within these Regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow instructions within these Regulations brings the office of Town Councillor into disrepute.
- 1.10. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the Town Council. The Town Clerk has been appointed as RFO for this Town Council and these regulations will apply accordingly.

1.11. The RFO;

- acts under the policy direction of the Town Council;
- administers the Town Council's Financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and Proper Practices;
- determines on behalf of the Town Council its accounting records and accounting control systems;
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
- maintains the accounting records of the Town Council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
- assists the Town Council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the Town Council.

- 1.12. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the Town Council's transactions and to enable the RFO to ensure that any income and expenditure account and statement of balances, or record of receipts and payments and additional information, as the case may be, or

management information prepared for the Town Council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations<sup>1</sup>.

1.13. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall in particular contain:

- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the Town Council and the matters to which the income and expenditure or receipts and payments account relate;
- a record of the assets and liabilities of the Town Council; and
- wherever relevant, a record of the Town Council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.

1.14. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:

- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the Town Council are recorded as soon as reasonably practicable and as accurately and reasonably as possible;
- procedures to enable the prevention and detection of inaccuracies and fraud and the ability to reconstruct any lost records;
- identification of the duties of officers dealing with financial transactions and division of responsibilities of those officers in relation to significant transactions;
- procedures to ensure that uncollectable amounts, including any bad debts are not submitted to the Town Council for approval to be written off except with the approval of the RFO and that the approvals are shown in the accounting records; and
- measures to ensure that risk is properly managed.

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<sup>1</sup> In England - Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011/817

1.15. In the absence of the RFO the FO has delegated approval to undertake the duties of the RFO adhering to Financial Regulations and any other associated Town Council policy.

1.16. The Town Council is not empowered by these Regulations or otherwise to delegate certain specified decisions. In particular, any decision regarding:

- setting the final budget or the precept (Council Tax Requirement);
- approving accounting statements;
- approving an annual governance statement;
- borrowing;
- writing off bad debts;
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors, shall be a matter for the Full Town Council only.

1.17. In addition, the Town Council must:

- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all Town Council bank accounts;
- approve any grant or a single commitment in excess of £5,000; and
- in respect of the annual salary for any employee have regard to recommendations about annual salaries of employees made by the relevant Committee in accordance with its Terms of Reference.

1.18. In these Financial Regulations, 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.

In these Financial Regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in Governance and Accountability for Local Town Councils – a Practitioners' Guide (England) issued by the Joint Practitioners

Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Town Council Town Clerks (SLCC).

## **2. Accounting and Audit (Internal and External)**

- 2.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the Town Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate Guidance and proper practices.
- 2.2. On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, the Chairman of Policy and Finance Committee and Town Clerk/RFO shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the Finance Officer (FO). The Chairman and Town Clerk/RFO shall approve the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) using the Town Council accounts approval system as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the Town Council.
- 2.3. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the Town Council contained in the Annual Return (as specified in proper practices) as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and having certified the accounts shall submit them and report thereon to the Town Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations by 30th June annually.
- 2.4. The Town Council shall ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records, and of its system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or councillor shall make available such documents and records as appear to the Town Council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall, as directed by the Town Council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the Town Council considers necessary for that purpose.
- 2.5. The internal auditor shall be appointed and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the Town Council in accordance with proper practices.
- 2.6. The internal auditor shall:
  - appointed every 3 years;



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

2.7. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the Town Council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions; or
- direct the activities of any Town Council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

2.8. 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.

2.9. 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 statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

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

2.11. The Town Council will periodically review its internal day to day controls and procedures.

### **3. Annual Estimates (Budget) and Forward Planning**

- 3.1. Each committee shall review its five-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments. Having regard to the forecast, it shall thereafter formulate and submit proposals for the following financial year to the Policy and Finance Committee not later than the end of November each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.
- 3.2. The RFO must each year, by no later than December prepare detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the following financial year in the form of a budget to be considered by Policy and Finance Committee.
- 3.3. The Town Council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the Town Council's five-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.
- 3.4. The contingency budget shall be a minimum of 3 months and a maximum of 12 months operating costs.
- 3.5. The contingency budget of a minimum of 3 months operating costs and a maximum of twelve months operating costs of the Town Council shall be related and available from the contingency, EMF's and capital works arising from devolved assets and services.
- 3.6. The Town Council shall fix the precept (Council tax requirement), and relevant basic amount of Council tax to be levied for the ensuing financial year not later than by the end of January each year. The RFO shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each councillor with a copy of the approved annual budget.
- 3.7. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

## **4. Budgetary Control And Authority To Spend**

4.1. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the Committee approved budget. This delegated authority is to be determined by the Town Clerk/RFO.

4.2. The Town Clerk/RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise members of staff to disperse other monies with the authority of Full Town Council or Committees under the following restrictions:

- Tenders typically over £30,000
- Three quotes typically over £3,000
- Three estimates typically over £500
- Best value – small day to day purchases.
- The Town Clerk/RFO, in conjunction with Chairman of the Town Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for items up to £10,000.

Such authority is to be evidenced by a Minute.

Contracts may not be disaggregated to avoid controls imposed by these regulations.

4.3. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure other than by resolution of the Town Council, or duly delegated committee. During the budget year and with the approval of Town Council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate ('virement').

4.4. The FO to conduct regular checks to ensure all expenditure is within the powers of the Town Council to undertake and comply with the EU Procurement Directive (see section 10.1 procurement)

4.5. Unspent provisions in the revenue or capital budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year.

4.6. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually in September by the individual Committees in conjunction with the Personnel Committee for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by the minutes of the

Committees signed by the Chairman of Committees and or Town Council. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.

- 4.7. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of Town Council services, the Town Clerk/RFO may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the Town Council which in the Town Clerk/RFO judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £1,000. The Town Clerk/RFO shall report such action to the Chairman of the Town Council and relevant Committee as soon as possible, and to the Town Council and or relevant Committee as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.8. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Town Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 4.9. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Town Council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.
- 4.10. The RFO shall regularly provide the Town Council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose, "material" shall be in excess of 15% of the budget.
- 4.11. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by Town Council as part of the budgetary control process.

## **5. Banking Arrangements and Authorisation of Payments**

- 5.1. The Town Council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Town Council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency.
- 5.2. The FO shall prepare a monthly schedule of payments made forming part of the Agenda for Full Town Council to receive. The Town Council shall review the schedule for compliance and having satisfied itself shall authorise by a resolution of the Town Council. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of a contract of employment) may be summarised to remove public access to any personal information.
- 5.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Budget Line Manager, Finance Officer and two Town Councillors to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the Town Council.
- 5.4. The Finance Officer shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The Finance Officer shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order.
- 5.5. The Town Clerk/RFO and Finance Officer shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:
  - 5.5.1. If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of Town Council, where the Town Clerk/RFO and Finance Officer certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Town Council.

- 5.5.2. An expenditure item authorised under 5.6 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Town Council or
- 5.5.3. fund transfers within the Town Councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £10,000 provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Town Council.
- 5.6. For each financial year the Finance Officer shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation such as but not exclusively, Salaries, PAYE and NI, Superannuation Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which Town Council or a duly authorised committee may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 above (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Town Council.
- 5.7. On a monthly basis a record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and approved via the accounting approval system by the RFO, FO and two councillors on each and every occasion when payment is authorised - thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.
- 5.8. In respect of grants a duly authorised committee shall approve expenditure within any limits set by Town Council and in accordance with any Policy statement approved by Town Council.
- 5.9. Councillors are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the Town Council and shall comply with the Code and Standing Orders when a decision to authorise or instruct payment is made in respect of a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary or other interest, unless a dispensation has been granted.
- 5.10. The Town Council will aim to rotate the duties of councillors in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

## **6. Instructions for the Making of Payments**

- 6.1. The Town Council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.
- 6.2. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the Town Council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the Town Clerk/RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.3. A majority of payments shall be effected by BACS or cheque or other instructions to the Town Council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of Town Council.
- 6.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to Town Council shall be approved/signed by two councillors and countersigned by the budget line manager and FO.
- 6.5. To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 6.6. Cheques or orders for payment shall be reported to the Town Council at the next convenient meeting.
- 6.7. If thought appropriate by the Town 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 councillors and any payments are reported to Town Council as made. The approval of the use of a variable Direct Debit shall be renewed by resolution of the Town Council at least every two years.
- 6.8. If thought appropriate by the Town Council, payment for certain items (principally Salaries) may be made by Banker's Standing Order provided that the instructions are signed, or otherwise evidenced by two councillors are retained and any payments are reported to Town Council as made. The approval of the use of a Banker's Standing Order shall be renewed by resolution of the Town Council at least every two years.

- 6.9. If thought appropriate by the Town Council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods 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 Town Council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the Town Council at least every two years.
- 6.10. If thought appropriate by the Town Council payment for certain items may be made by the Town Council credit card or internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which councillors approved the payment.
- 6.11. Any Credit/Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to a limit of £4,000 to be paid off in full each month.

The card only be used for corporate procurement and no personal use.

The authorisation to use the card is delegated to the Budget Line Manager, two Councillors and the FO through the accounting approval system.

A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the Town Council. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to the Town Council and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of the Town Council.

Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the Town Council will be specifically restricted to:

A limit of £2,000 expenditure activity to be paid off in full each month.

The accounts only be used for corporate procurement and no personal use.

The authorisation to use the corporate credit card be delegated to the Budget Line Manager, two Councillors and the FO through the accounting approval system.



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

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 or a duly delegated committee.

- 6.12. No employee or Town Councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the Town Council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the Town Council or a duly delegated committee.
- 6.13. Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question, and preferably off site.
- 6.14. The Town Council, and any councillors using computers for the Town 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.
- 6.15. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Finance Officer shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The Bank Mandate approved by the Town Council shall identify a number of Town Councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts. The bank mandate will state clearly the amounts of payments that can be instructed by the use of the Service Administrator alone, or by the Service Administrator with a stated number of approvals.
- 6.16. 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 Town Council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.
- 6.17. Supplier bank details used for electronic payments are particularly vulnerable to fraud or error and it is therefore essential that the following procedure is followed to carry out any changes.

Any requests for change to supplier bank details for payments must be received by written hard copy notification from the supplier.

The written hard copy notification from the supplier must be authenticated and confirmed by further email communication with the supplier. The Finance Officer to oversee changes being made to supplier bank details and immediately inform the RFO of any concerns.

The Chairman or Vice Chairman of Policy and Finance Committee will check and sign off standing data of all suppliers' bank details on a monthly basis when signing the bank reconciliations.

6.18. The Finance Officer may provide petty cash to officers for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the FO with a claim for reimbursement.

6.18.1. The FO shall maintain a petty cash float of £215.00 (which includes Library float) for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.

6.18.2. Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.

6.18.3. Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to Town Council under 5.2 above.

## **7. Payment Of Salaries**

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

7.2. The Town Clerk/RFO and Chairman of Policy and Finance Committee will conduct regular checks to ensure that PAYE and VAT regulations have been followed.

- 7.3. Employee timesheets do not need to be signed by the Town Clerk/RFO as long as this is carried out by individual line managers.
- 7.4. Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be required to be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, or similar statutory or discretionary deductions must be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to the next available Town Council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.
- 7.5. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the Town Council.
- 7.6. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a separate confidential record (confidential cash book). This confidential record is not open to inspection or review (under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or otherwise) other than:
  - 7.6.1. by any Town Councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;
  - 7.6.2. by the internal auditor;
  - 7.6.3. by the external auditor; or
  - 7.6.4. by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.
- 7.7. The total of such payments in each calendar month shall be reported with all other payments as made as may be required under these Financial Regulations, to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 7.8. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the Town Council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by Town Council.

## **8. Loans and Investments**

- 8.1. All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the Town Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Town Council as to terms and purpose. The application for Borrowing Approval, and subsequent arrangements for the Loan shall only be approved by full Town Council.
- 8.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal Borrowing Approval from the Secretary of State/Welsh Assembly Government (such as Hire Purchase or Leasing of tangible assets) shall be subject to approval by the full Town Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Town Council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.
- 8.3. All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Town Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with Town Council policy.
- 8.4. The Town Council shall consider the need for an Investment Strategy and Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the Town Council at least annually.
- 8.5. All investments of money under the control of the Town Council shall be in the name of the Town Council.
- 8.6. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 8.7. Payments in respect of short term or long term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, or branch, shall be made in accordance with Regulation 5 (Authorisation of payments) and Regulation 6 (Instructions for payments).

## **9. Income**

- 9.1. The collection of all sums due to the Town Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2. Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Town Council, notified to the RFO and

the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Town Council.

- 9.3. The Town Council will review all fees and charges during the annual budget and precept setting.
- 9.4. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the Town Council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5. All sums received on behalf of the Town Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the Town Council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6. The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Town Council.
- 9.8. The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 9.9. Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Town Council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the Town Council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 9.10. Any income arising which is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. Instructions for the payment of funds due from the charitable trust to the Town Council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any Town Council meeting (see also Regulation 16 below).

**Please refer to the Income and Banking Procedure which is augment to the above income regulations.**

## **10. Procurement**

10.1. The European Union Procurement Directive shall apply and the terms of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2015 including thresholds shall be followed. UK tendering thresholds are set by Parliament every two years (01.01.22) and aligned to the European Union (EU) and World Trade Organisation (WTO) agreements.

- Up to £30,000 (Including VAT) requirements in the Town Councils standing orders and financial standing orders.
- Over £30,000 (Including VAT) use of the Contract Finder website, Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU), Find a Tender ([www.gov.uk/find-tender](http://www.gov.uk/find-tender)) and other light touch rules in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. If the Town Council is inviting specific firms and not opening up to wider competition, the Town Council does not have to advertise the opportunity on Contracts Finder (Public Contracts Regulations 2015, Reg 110(5)(b))
- European Union requirements and the 'threshold' EU requirements apply to any contract the value of which exceeds the 'threshold'. The threshold is reviewed every two years. For contracts commencing on or after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022 the threshold is:
- Over £213,477 for goods or services, or £5,336,937 for public works (construction), must comply with the full requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. These include specific tendering methods and timescales, as well as a requirement to advertise on both the Contracts Finder website and Find-a-Tender (the UK e-noticification service).

## **11. Orders for Work, Goods and Services**

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

11.2. Order books shall be controlled by the Finance Officer.

11.3. All councillors and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each

transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 13.1 below.

11.4. A councillor may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the Town Council.

11.5. The Finance Officer shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the Finance Officer shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the Minutes can record the power being used.

## **12. Contracts**

12.1. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

12.1.1. Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that this regulation need not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:

12.1.1.1. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;

12.1.1.2. for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes;

12.1.1.3. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;

12.1.1.4. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Town Council;

12.1.1.5. for additional audit work of the external Auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Town Clerk/RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Town Council); and

- 12.1.1.6. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.
- 12.1.2. Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding **£30,000** 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 Town Clerk/RFO shall invite tenders from at least three firms to be taken from an appropriate approved list.
- 12.1.3. The Town Council must not split contracts to avoid the contract rules.
- 12.1.4. 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 Town Council.
- 12.1.5. Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Town Clerk/RFO 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 Town Clerk/RFO in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a secure email address (which account has access restricted to the Assistant Town Clerk and Administration Officer) until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- 12.1.6. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Town Clerk/RFO or Assistant Town Clerk in the presence of at least one councillor. Tenders received in the secure email account will be opened by the Administration Officer in the presence of the Assistant Town Clerk.
- 12.1.7. If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £30,000 or if all the tenders are identical the Town Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.



12.1.8. **Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall refer to the Anti-Bribery Policy Statement and Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy.**

12.1.9. When it is intended to enter into a contract of less than £30,000 and above £3,000 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 Town Clerk/RFO or FO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £3,000 but over £500 the Town Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 12.1 (ii) above shall apply.

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

12.1.11. Should it occur that the Town Council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the Town 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.

### **13. Payments Under Contracts for Building or Other Construction Works**

13.1. Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the RFO upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).

13.2. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the Town Council.

13.3. Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the Town Council or delegated committee and Town Clerk/RFO to the contractor in writing, the Town Council or delegated committee being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

## **14. Stores and Equipment**

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

14.2. 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.

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

14.4. The FO in conjunction with Line Managers shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

## **15. Assets, Properties and Estates**

15.1. The Town Clerk/RFO shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the Town Council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the Town Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.

15.2. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired without the authority of the Town Council or delegated Committee, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £1,000.

15.3. No tangible moveable property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the Town Council or delegated Committee, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £250.

- 15.4. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Town Council, together with any other consents required by law, In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to Town Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 15.5. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full Town Council. In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to Town Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 15.6. Subject only to the limit set in Reg.15.2 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full Town Council or delegated Committee. In each case a Report in writing shall be provided to Town Council with a full business case.
- 15.7. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.

## **16. Insurance**

- 16.1. Following the annual risk assessment (Financial Regulation 18), the FO in conjunction with Line Managers shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Town Council's insurers in consultation with the Town Clerk/RFO.
- 16.2. Line Managers shall give prompt notification to the FO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 16.3. The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Town Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.

16.4. The RFO shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim and shall report these to Town Council at the next available meeting.

16.5. All appropriate councillors and employees of the Town 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 Town Council, or duly delegated committee.

## **17. Charities**

17.1. Where the Town Council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Town Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Town Clerk and RFO shall arrange for any Audit or Independent Examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

## **18. Risk Management**

18.1. The Town Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Town Clerk/RFO with the FO and Senior Policy and Data Compliance Monitoring Officer shall prepare, for approval by the Town Council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Town Council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the Town Council at least annually.

18.2. When considering any new activity, the Town Clerk with the FO shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the Town Council.

## **19. Suspension and Revision of Financial Regulations**

19.1. It shall be the duty of the Town Council to review the Financial Regulations of the Town Council from time to time. The Town Clerk/RFO shall make arrangements with the FO and Senior Policy and Data Compliance Monitoring Officer to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the

Town Council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these financial regulations.

19.2. The Town Council may, by resolution of the Town Council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of Town Council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risks arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to all councillors.

## Saltash Town Council Financial Regulations Version History

Version History					
Date	Version	Author/ editor	Committee/ date	Minute no.	Notes
01.2015	2015	RFO	FTC 08.01.2015	342/14/15	Recommended by PandR 16.12.2014 Min.no. 71/14/15
04.2016	2016	RFO	FTC 07.04.2016	24/16/17	Recommended by PandR 15.03.2016 Min.no. 116/15/16
05.2017	2017	RFO	-	-	Minor text amendment 12.1h
04.2018	2018	RFO	PandR 10.04.2018	07/18/19	Tendering thresholds, delegated authority
08.2018	08/2018	RFO	FTC 06.09.2018	271/18/19(1)(a)	Recommended by PandR 28.08.2018 Min 76/18/19 Amended sections 3,4,5,6,10,12,15
11.2018		RFO	FTC 06.12.2018	40718/19	7.3 Payment of salaries (timesheet signatories) – auditor advice
01.2019	2019	RFO	FTC 06.12.2018	407/18/19	3.4, 3.5 – Statutory contingency
01.2019	2019	SB	PandF (REC) 14.02.2019	193/18/19e	12e Tender opening, number of Town

		FO			Councillors present increased to 2  NALC/CALC recommendations
03.2019	03/2019	FO	FTC 07.03.2019	539/18/19	Amended version adopted from 01.04.2019
06.2020	2020	FO	PandF 09.06.2020	39/20/21	Updated
08.2020	2020	RFO	PandF 08.09.2020	69/20/21	Amendments to sections 3;4;5;14;16
03.2021	2021	FO	PandF 09.03.2021	172/20/21i	Amendments to 2.3; 6.4;6.11
06.2021	06/2021	FO	FTC 03.06.2021	74/21/22m	For re Adoption (new Town Council)
02.2022	2022	FO	FTC 03.03.2022	451/21/22c	Annual review – amendments to job titles, precept setting timeline
05.2022	05/2022	SB/AJT	ATM 05.05.2022	54/22/23f(ii)	4. Budgetary Control and Authority to Spent p9  10. Procurement p 18

					12. Contracts p19 Readopted
09.2022	09/2022	AJT	PandF 28.09.2022	66/22/23	Petty cash amount reduced p15
05.2023	2023	AJT	FTC 04.05.2023	65/23/24b(xiv)	Contract/tender amounts. Readopted
02.2024	2024-25 DRAFT	SB	PandF 27.02.2024	156/23/24b(14)	Reviewed for recommendation to FTC 03.2024
03.2024	2024	SB	FTC 07.03.2024	367/23/24c	Recommendation from PandF. Approved
05.2024	2024	SB	ATM 02.05.2024	64/24/25b(13)	Readopted