

Hawkley Parish Council

Financial Regulations for 2025/26

Introduction

These financial regulations shall govern the conduct and management of the Council's finances and financial transactions and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council.

Responsible Finance Officer (R.F.O.)

1. The Clerk to the Council shall be the Council's Responsible Finance Officer (R.F.O.) and appointed as such in accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.
2. The R.F.O. will be responsible for the proper conduct and management of the Council's financial transactions and the observance of appropriate Audit and Account Regulations. Therefore:
 - a. The council must ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.
 - b. At least once a year, the council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control, before approving the Annual Governance Statement.
 - c. The accounting control systems determined by the RFO must include measures to:
 - i. ensure that risk is appropriately managed;
 - ii. ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;
 - iii. prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and
 - iv. allow the reconstitution of any lost records;

Annual Budget/Precept

3. The Council's financial year will be 1 April to 31 March the following year. The Clerk/R.F.O. will annually present estimates of income and expenditure for the current year and estimates of expenditure for the ensuing year to the Council who will use that information in the determination of the amount of the precept for the ensuing financial year.
4. The Clerk/R.F.O. will submit the precept to the District Council.

Budgetary Control/Audit

5. The Council shall make appropriate arrangements for:
 - a. Periodic internal audit of the Council's accounts;
 - b. Periodic internal review of the internal audit of annual accounts, in compliance with the Internal Review of the Internal Audit Regulations 2006.
 - c. and every 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.
6. The Clerk/RFO shall
 - a. provide to the Council, at each full meeting, a financial statement (balance sheets) showing income received and expenditure incurred on the Council's behalf.

- b. make available all ledgers and correlating bank statements for checking and approval. The Chair, or in their absence the Vice Chair, shall verify their approval of the ledgers by signing them at each full PC meeting or quarterly.
- c. complete the Council's annual accounts and the Summary and Statement of Accounts for audit as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and shall submit them to the Council for approval.

Banking

- 7. The Council shall maintain appropriate bank accounts
 - a. at least one account shall bear interest at market rates.
 - b. Payments will ordinarily be made using online banking, initiated by the Clerk/R.F.O and
 - c. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.

Income

- 8. The Clerk/R.F.O. shall be responsible for collecting all monies due to the Council. All monies received shall be banked at the earliest opportunity. Any outstanding sums/charges shall be reported to the Council for any necessary action.

Expenditure/Payments

- 9. The Clerk/R.F.O. may incur reasonable petty cash expenditure for day-to-day administrative purposes. Vouchers supporting payments shall be kept and an appropriate record maintained.
- 10. The Clerk/R.F.O. shall examine all invoices for payment and be satisfied that all work, goods or services to which the invoices refer have been received and/or carried out satisfactorily before payment is made.
- 11. All invoices/vouchers etc. for payment shall be kept and an appropriate Receipts and Payments record maintained.
- 12. All invoices properly payable shall be settled within a reasonable time.
- 13. Except as provided in Regulation 14 all bank payments shall be authorised by the Council prior to payment.
- 14. Where it is necessary to make a payment before it has/can be authorised by the Council such payment shall be certified as to its correctness and urgency by the Clerk/R.F.O. and may then be authorised by the Chair or in their absence by the Vice Chair. All payments dealt with under this Regulation shall be separately included in the next schedule of payments laid before the Council.
- 15. All bank payments shall be made and funds transferred between accounts in accordance with the mandate given by the Council to the bank. At least two Signatories are required to amend the banking mandate.

Orders for Work, Goods and Services

- 16. Where possible the Council shall obtain more than one estimate, quotation or tender for work, goods, services etc. the cost of which is expected to exceed £1,000.

17. All necessary orders for work, goods, services etc. once approved by the Council may be issued by the Clerk/R.F.O.

18. The Chair may authorise urgent minor works on a number of occasions and at a maximum cost per order of £500.

19. In all cases orders for work, goods, services etc. shall be based on ensuring best value.

Leases and Property

20. The Clerk/R.F.O. shall be responsible for the safe custody of all leases, title deeds and agreements.

21. The Clerk/R.F.O. shall maintain records of all property, equipment etc. held by the Council.

Insurance

22. The Clerk/R.F.O shall be responsible for procuring insurance cover appropriate to the Council's activities and responsibilities etc. and shall include adequate cover for public liability, employers' liability and fidelity guarantee.

Salaries and Expenses

23. The Council shall make appropriate arrangements for payment of salaries, statutory employment costs and expenses.

V.A.T.

24. The Clerk/R.F.O. shall maintain adequate V.A.T. records, shall submit appropriate returns as required and claim reimbursement of V.A.T. paid by the Council on purchases, services etc.

Loans and Investments

25. Any loans, investments, borrowing shall be in the name of the Council be authorised by and remain under the control of the full Council.

Register of Assets and Investments

26. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date and reviewed annually by the Council.

Review and Revision of Financial Regulations

27. The Council shall review the Council's Financial Regulations from time to time and make such amendments as the Council considers appropriate.

Financial Regulations adopted at meeting of 21 May 2025. Due for review May 2026