



Lapley, Stretton
& Wheaton Aston
Parish Council

You are here by summoned to virtually attend a meeting of Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Aston Parish Council, which will be held on Thursday 4th March 2021 at 7.00pm via Zoom conferencing system. This meeting is accessible to the public at the following link:

PC Surgery: a representative from the Council will be available on line (link above) from 6.30pm for parishioners to raise any concerns.

Meeting ID: 880 5003 5792

Passcode: 144661

Email office@wheatonastonparishcouncil.gov.uk Telephone 07495789051 for assistance.

All attendees will be on mute as they enter the meeting and will be unmuted by the Clerk/assistant Clerk upon raising a hand. Please arrive in the virtual waiting room at least ten minutes before the start of the meeting in case of any connection issues.

Any members of the public who wish to speak at the meeting please contact the Clerk in advance

The Council, members of the public and the press may record/film/photograph or broadcast this meeting when the public and the press are not lawfully excluded. Any member of the public who attends a meeting and objects to being filmed should advise the Parish Council Manager (in advance) who will instruct that they are not included in the filming.

In order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, all persons attending this meeting are hereby notified that this meeting will be tape-recorded by the Parish Council. The purpose of taping is that recordings act as an aide-memoire to assist the Parish Council Clerk in the compilation of minutes.

Public Forum

Democratic thirty-minute period/public discussion time: From 7.00pm residents are invited to give their views to the Parish Council on items on this agenda or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the Chairman. Members of the public may not take part in the Parish Council meeting itself (standing order 3 f). No member of the public may speak for more than five minutes (standing order 3g)

Please ensure that all mobile phones are switched to silent during the Parish Council meeting.

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| 111.To consider apologies | -decision |
| 112.Declaration of Interests
To receive declarations of interest and consider dispensation requests & Code of Conduct | -Information |
| 113. Signing of the minutes.
To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of 21 st January 2021 | -decision |
| 114. Clerks report
To receive report from the Parish Clerk | -information |
| 115. District report
To receive the report from the District Council | -information |
| 116. County report
To receive the report from the County Council | -information |
| 117. Financial matters
To consider financial matters including:
a. To approve the expenditure for January 2021
b. To receive the Financial Summary to 31 st January 2021
c. To receive the Financial Comparison to 31 st January 2021
d. To note payments/decisions made under delegated powers | -decision |

- 118. Planning recommendations** -decision
 To consider
 -planning matters including
 a) Planning application 20/00748/FUL
 Planning application 21/00119/FUL
 Planning application 21/00163/FUL
 Planning application 21/00129/FUL
- 119. Working group reports**
To consider the recommendations: -decision
Christmas lights- Quotes received for a three year LTA for the Christmas display
- Contractor A £5474 - £8110
 - Contractor B: £6782
 - Contractor C: £5543.10 (unable to provide stress tests or Electrical tests therefore these are not included in the quote)
 - Contractor B also identified the need for 8 new timers, cost £1173
 - Recommendation to book event
 - Recommendation to defer Christmas lights competition discussion until after the summer
- Maintenance:**
 To receive an update on the Map board
- 120. To consider the speeding/road condition issues on the A5** -information/decision
 To consider any new information
- 121. Highways division fund** -decision
 To consider works required to be built into the four-year plan
- 122. Canal Bank** - information/decision
 Item request from previous meeting
- 123. Birkenshaw Lane** - information/decision
 Item request from previous meeting
- 124. Future use of Broadholes Lane** -information/decision
 To receive an update to aid further decisions
- 125. NALC Foundation award for Quality Council** - information/decision
 To confirm the application for the foundation award of the NALC accreditation scheme
- 126. Policy Review** -decision
 To review the following updated policies:
- Financial Regulations
 - Community engagement
 - Climate and biodiversity
- 127. Remote meeting provision** -decision
 To consider supporting the request to extend the remote meeting provision
- 128. MGCLG consultation' The right to regenerate'** - information/decision
 To consider a response <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/right-to-regenerate-reform-of-the-right-to-contest/right-to-regenerate-reform-of-the-right-to-contest>
- 129. Items for future**
 Each councillor may use this opportunity to report on matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas. **Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.**
- 130. Date of next meeting:** Thursday 22nd April 2021

Meeting ID: 819 6199 2226 Passcode: 939186

Amy Watson Parish Council Clerk

25th February 2021

Crime and Disorder Implications

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities to consider the crime and disorder implications when exercising its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions and to do all that is reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area. Where relevant any decisions made at the Parish Council meeting have taken this duty of Care into consideration.

Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Aston Parish Council

Clerks Report

Information

SSC remain investigating the change of use at Broadholes lane play area for other facilities

Church Lane layby Lapley – The drawings have been signed off and now just awaiting a response from the Environmental team

Consultation in place to reduce the limit from 40mph to 30mph between Western- Under-Lizard and Blymill

Concern raised about potential flooding on Ivetsey Road, referred to SCC highways. Land adjacent is earmarked for future development, relevant SCC officer copied for info

2.2.21 Grit bin request placed with SCC to be located near the junction of The Avenue and A5 ref 4227464

Replacement key for WDP access ordered ref 3874013

4.2.21 Road breaking up/ potholes reported to SCC at Broadholes Lane junction with Ivetsey Road 4227970

23.2.21 Reported an open lighting column to Eon in School Road

23.2.21 Evaluation report returned to PCC giving an update on the CCTV project at Marston Field

Police information

Maintenance

Consultations

£7.8m Cannock Chase conservation plan backed - Staffordshire County Council Newsroom

Project team continues to work at pace as latest phase of Stafford's growth boosting road scheme begins - Staffordshire County Council Newsroom

Small business and employee support set to be ramped up through Staffordshire councils partnership - Staffordshire County Council Newsroom

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/right-to-regenerate-reform-of-the-right-to-contest/right-to-regenerate-reform-of-the-right-to-contest>

www.hs2.org.uk/phase2a

Meetings/Events

Training/CPD

- 22nd Feb Procurement and Contracts (Clerk)
- 3rd March Parish online basics (clerk and A/clerk)
- 3rd March Parish online advanced (Clerk and A/Clerk)
- 15th March Risk assessment over view (Clerk and A/Clerk)
- 17th Feb MCHLG consultation working group
- Xmas working group meeting 24th Feb 7pm
- 10th March 5.30pm Locality Two forum

Items emailed to councillors

20.1.21 SCC Community testing

21.1.21 SSC enabler details

21.1.21 SPCA newsbulletin

22.1.21 Cllr M Sutton details on parish information

27.1.21 Blymill PC speed reduction consultation details

27.1.21 SSC planning application 21/00076/FUL

28.1.21 SPCA newsbulletin

3.2.21 Planning application 21/00093/FUL

4.2.21 Microshade Kaspersky's update

4.2.21 SPCA newsbulletin

9.2.21 SSC Locality two forum details

9.2.21 SLCC response to Handsworth PC viral meeting

9.2.21 SPCA newsbulletin special

9.2.21 SSC Planning application 20/00748/FUL

10.2.21 SCC Enforcement notices

11.2.21 SSC planning application 21/00119/FUL

25.2.21 SSC Planning application 21/00163/FUL

25.2.21 SSC Planning application 21/00129/FUL
25.2.21 SSC Forest of Mercia info on creating woodlands
25.2.21 SPCA newsbulletin
25.2.21 SSC IT guest verification details

Use of devolved powers

Response to planning application_21/00076/FUL- LSWA PC does not have any objections to this application
Response to planning application 21/00093/FUL- LSWA PC does not have any objections to this application

Responded to the NALC consultation on the Right to Regenerate as below:

The main consultation questions NALC will be responding to in this consultation are as below and NALC seeks the views of county associations and member councils in response to these questions to help inform its own submission to MHCLG:

Increasing the usefulness and effectiveness of the right

Q1: Do you consider the Right to Contest useful?

No, the process is too difficult for success.

Q2: Do you think there are any current barriers to using the right effectively, and if so, how would you suggest they be overcome?

A balance needs to be found to ensure a rigorous process is still in place under the right to regenerate whilst also being simple enough for a higher rate of success on appropriate sites.

Applications need go the LA before MHCLG for local knowledge input and give LA's the opportunity to implement an intermediate use for allocated land in the local plan

Making it clearer when land is unused or underused

Q3: Would a definition of unused or underused land be useful, and, if so, what should such a definition include?

Yes, a criteria should be implemented to identify areas or underused and unused land and should include a time scale for proposed use. Allotments and open spaces should not be included as an identifiable area

Extending the scope of the right

Q4: Should the right be extended to include unused and underused land owned by town and parish councils?

No, Parish Councils are diligent with land and uses and are mindful of historical uses/implications of the land. Councilors are elected at local level and are entrusted to act appropriately and diligently for their parish

[NALC Supplemental Question: Do you think that this proposal could lead to a back way in for developers to acquire redundant council-owned land and buildings? Yes, it is concerning and open to fraudulent and corrupt behavior

Land where a public body has an intended use

Q5: Should the government incentivise temporary use of unused land which has plans for longer term future use? Yes, as per question 2 LA's should be encouraged to find an intermediate use for land whilst waiting for implementation of the local plan etc

A greater role for local authorities

Q6: Should the government introduce a requirement for local authorities to be contacted before a request is made? Absolutely, local knowledge is imperative knowledge

Presumption in favour of disposal

Q7: Should the government introduce a presumption in favour of disposal of land or empty homes/garages where requests are made under the right? No, all applicants should be viewed equally and without time constraints (to protect charities etc who may need time to raise a bid) LSWA PC feel that localism is being taken away with this proposal

Publicity and reporting

Q8: Do you agree that the government should require these publicity measures where requests are made under the right? Yes, to adhere to transparency and accountability. This should not just be digitally as this is exclusive of many parishioners

Right of first refusal

Q9: Should government offer a 'right of first refusal' to the applicant as a condition of disposal? No, as per question 7 all applicants should be viewed equally

Conditions attached to disposals

Q10: Should the government impose conditions on the disposal of land? And if so, what conditions would be appropriate? Yes, conditions should be appropriate and follow local plans and any local constraints

Q11: Do you have any additional suggestions regarding reforms that could improve the effectiveness of the Right to Contest process? Yes, LSWA PC feel that brownfields and greenbelts sites should follow a separate process for consultation. Given the nature of the two areas it is difficult to consider what its appropriate for each are under the same rulings. What is appropriate for a brownfield site may not be appropriate for a greenbelt site.

Lapley Stretton & Wheaton Aston Parish Council

Expenditure transactions - payments approval list start of year 01/04/20

Tn no	Cheque	Gross	Heading	Invoice date	Details	Cheque
222	fp28435769 270121stpt	£300.00	180/3	30/01/21	St. Mary's First School - grant to ptfa for it support	£300.00
223	fxcard	£12.99	170	31/01/21	Amazon - plastic wallets	£12.99
224		£42.18		31/01/21	Amazon - headset for zoom meetings	
1		£35.99	170		headset for zoom meetings	
2		£6.19	170		insurance for headset	
225	dd170121ee	£50.04	100/10	31/01/21	EE - MONTHLY CHARGES	£50.04
227	fp19635398 6ms	£42.00	100/19/1	31/01/21	Microshade Business Consultants Ltd - monthly charge less overpmt	£42.00
228	fp34209308 81spca	£30.00	100/3/2	31/01/21	Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association - training invoice - planning Cllr Anderson	£30.00
229	fp51433383 0turno	£216.00	160/1/1	31/01/21	Turnock Limited - xmas lights invoice- call out faulty clock	£216.00
230	fp43377852 5ds	£349.61	120/1/2	31/01/21	Ditton Services - repayment on inv 793 which has been refunded due to miscalculation	£349.61
232	fp50562254 6aw	£14.39	100/6/1	31/01/21	Mrs Amy Watson - zoom reimbursement	£14.39
235	fp29489581 sp	£206.22	160/1/2	31/01/21	Staffordshire print Ltd. - xmas banners and cards	£206.22
236	fp43798565 8turno	£2,896.80	160/1/1	31/01/21	Turnock Limited - lighting take down charge	£2,896.80
237	fp10470227 5ds	£1,237.00	120/1/1	31/01/21	Ditton Services - monthly charge	£1,237.00
238	fp19108331 0sp	£64.35	100/1	31/01/21	Staffordshire print Ltd. - flyers for lockdown advice	£64.35
240	fp23736955 9jrb	£137.88	120/5	31/01/21	JRB Enterprises Ltd - dog bags	£137.88
246	fo26159238 5ssc	£260.00	100/2	31/01/21	South Staffordshire District Council - monthly rent	£260.00
Sub Total		£5,859.46				
		£5,143.81			Confidential	
Total		£11,003.27				

Financial Summary - Cashbook

Summary between 01/04/20 and 31/01/21 inclusive.

Balances at the start of the year

Ordinary Accounts

Barclays savings account	£60,450.58
Fair FX prepaid card	£71.66
Unity Trust - Current Account	£18,978.30
Unity trust working reserves	£16,492.68
Total	£95,993.22

RECEIPTS	Net	Vat	Gross
Parish Council	£133,016.64	£0.00	£133,016.64
Total Receipts	£133,016.64	£0.00	£133,016.64
PAYMENTS	Net	Vat	Gross
Parish Council	£91,004.55	£7,740.65	£98,745.20
Total Payments	£91,004.55	£7,740.65	£98,745.20

Closing Balances

Ordinary Accounts

Barclays savings account	£52,001.50
Fair FX prepaid card	£89.17
Unity Trust - Current Account	£50,450.33
Unity trust working reserves	£27,723.66
Total	£130,264.66

Financial Budget Comparison

Comparison between 01/04/20 and 31/01/21 inclusive.

Excludes transactions with an invoice date prior to 01/04/20

	2020/2021	Reserve Movements	Actual Net	Balance
INCOME				
4	FX card	£410.00	£0.00	-£410.00
10	Precept	£118,067.00	£0.00	£118,067.00
20	Grants	£0.00	£0.00	£170.00
32	Unity Trust Bank Interest	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
33	Reserve Account Interest	£0.00	£0.00	£15.98
40	Miscellaneous	£0.00	£0.00	£528.61
45	Crime Prevention	£0.00	£0.00	£2,182.00
50	Barclay's Savings Account	£0.00	£0.00	£56.92
90	Prizes and Awards	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
99	Vat Refund	£0.00	£0.00	£11,996.13
Total Income	£118,477.00	£0.00	£133,016.64	£14,539.64
EXPENDITURE				
100	General Administration	£24,457.00	£0.00	£14,857.09
110	Salaries	£49,855.00	£0.00	£37,620.70
120	Repairs & Grounds Maintenance	£28,750.00	£0.00	£17,707.67
130	Villages' Improvements	£3,350.00	£0.00	£591.90
140	Play Areas	£6,160.00	£0.00	£3,696.28
150	Subscriptions	£762.00	£0.00	£701.00
160	Christmas Celebrations	£10,351.00	£0.00	£7,274.61
170	Debit Card - General Expenses	£460.00	£0.00	£507.52
180	Donations	£4,000.00	£0.00	£3,532.35
190	CCTV	£840.00	£0.00	£1,563.68
200	Capital Expenditure	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
201	councillor tablet	£3,500.00	£0.00	£2,951.75
Total Expenditure	£132,485.00	£0.00	£91,004.55	£41,480.45
Total Income	£118,477.00	£0.00	£133,016.64	£14,539.64
Total Expenditure	£132,485.00	£0.00	£91,004.55	£41,480.45

Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Aston Parish Council

Policy to tackle Climate Change

What is Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Aston Parish Council (LSWA PC) already doing?

LSWA PC has already introduced several measures to show its commitment to helping to protect the environment and these are listed below:

- If the office staff cannot make use of waste-paper, it is recycled (except confidential papers) along with recyclable plastic items, cardboard and tins.
- Glass bottles/coffee jars are recycled.
- Using glasses instead of plastic cups, as well as avoiding, where possible, the use of plastic plates and cutlery
- For refreshments at meetings the measures include use of crockery, metal teaspoons, bio degradable teabags and loose coffee and glasses where possible.
- No usage of single use condiments sachets
- Straws are not used in the office or at events (unless required for assistance with drinking).
- Staff try, where possible, to bring in their own lunch therefore reducing the use of single use packaging.
- Soap dispensers are refillable.
- Councillors are encouraged to receive agendas and minutes by e-mail, which is the choice of the majority (although some documents do require printing).
- Goods and services are purchased locally, where possible, to reduce mileage and packaging. In addition, we try to combine meetings to save on travel
- All invitations and correspondence from LSWAPC are sent via e-mail, where possible.
- LSWA PC aims to further reduce the use of single use plastic and paper wherever it can and to make use of further initiatives to reduce its carbon footprint.
- Provision of insect hotels, bird feeders, swift/swallow nests and bird nests in Broadholes Play Area , Lapley Green and Primrose Play Area
- Biodiversity in public spaces. LSWA PC is not responsible for the highway verges, although, it has identified suitable areas that can be replaced with a wildflower area and will work with South Staffs District Council to implement this.
- Trees that are felled due to being dead, diseased or dying, are replaced with native species, where possible, and research is carried out to determine which species benefit the wildlife the most. Where possible, felled trees are to remain onsite to be used as a natural habitat. Guidance is also sought from the Tree Officer at South Staffordshire District Council .
- Designate and protect sites as local green spaces, new play spaces (formal and informal) and green infrastructure networks, encouraging local residents into the fresh air, walking or cycling rather than using their cars for local journeys . LWA PC are to consider the purchase of map board displaying local walks
- All employees submit online time sheets for work reducing the need for printing and postage
- As a response to climate change LSWA PC will consider the location of all contractors before placing any orders with the view of reducing mileage and emissions

What does LSWA PC plan to do?

LSWA PC is aware that there are still measures to be introduced which include, but are not limited to, the following:

To comment on small and large planning applications. Planning decisions will be made by the local planning authority, which needs to hear from those that support the applications. The UK needs to increase the amount of renewable energy it generates by around eight-fold. Comments to include how an application can aid the environment, can the application support renewable energy?

- Move to a 'paperless council' where councillors will be provided with a tablet for meeting purposes and purchase a projector for the public to view documents. This will remove the requirement of paper copies in meetings
- Office staff to reduce the paper files held and aim to reduce printing by storing files on Citrix
- Engage with the Local Plan and future developments regarding different sources of energy generation, i.e. solar panels.
- Encourage young people to engage with activities which are already taking place.
- Encourage walking by: employees and Councillors should also be encouraged to walk, cycle or use public transport or car-share where possible.
- Encourage residents to increase biodiversity in their back gardens.
- Bring together groups of people for bulk purchases or purchase goods with other local authorities
- Oppose high-carbon developments, promoting sustainable alternatives instead.
- Encourage national changes to bus services regulations, so all areas can regulate buses as London does, and urban profit-making routes can cross-fund loss making rural routes.
- Reduce pesticide use and other harmful activities.
- Encourage residents and local landowners to take part in tree planting. The Tree Charter, developed by the Woodland Trust, provides excellent guidance on how to increase tree cover. The National Association of Local Councils website provides case studies where it has been used¹.
- Buying green electricity helps develop new renewable energy. Friends of the Earth has identified Ecotricity, Good Energy and Octopus as the greenest energy companies.
- Support the introduction of safe walking and cycle routes and, where necessary, work in partnership with the local authority to deliver them. To introduce a 'map board' with the local walking routes highlighted
- Ensure the climate change or nature implications of decisions are known before making them. It isn't credible to accept the need for rapid action on climate change and nature and then make decisions without knowing whether they'll be harmful or helpful. Requiring every decision to be well informed is common sense as well as good practice.

This Action Plan will be a flexible, working document that can be added to when required.

Created: January 2020

Approved: February 2020

Updated: March 2021

Sources:

- Friends of the Earth, October 2019, 20 actions parish and town councils can take on the climate and nature emergency - Friends of the Earth Demonstrate leadership through your own practical actions

¹ NALC website, The Tree Charter, [link to the NALC website for information on the tree charter](#).

Community Engagement Policy

Lapley, Stretton and Wheaton Aston (LSWA) Parish Council is committed to engaging with and empowering its residents and communities so that they can be actively involved in decisions that affect them. The Council will work proactively to strengthen and improve working relationships with our partners; statutory bodies, organisations, local business and voluntary groups. LSWA Parish Council aims to be responsive to the needs of the local community and to involve its parishioners in the Council's decision-making about the issues which affect them including planning, delivery of services and the future of the area.

To achieve this, the Council will provide its parishioners with:

- relevant information about services, policies and decisions that might affect or interest them;
- opportunities for them to have their say about decisions, services and plans through consultations, surveys and conversation
- opportunities to get involved, over and above informing and consulting, to a greater influence over decisions and delivery.

In doing so, the Council will follow the principles set out below and will:

Honesty and openness

- Make clear the purpose of any engagement activity and use the right methods (proportionate to the significance of the issues) to engage the local community
- Be clear about what can be influenced
- Use honest, accurate and unbiased information

Listening

- Listen and respond to individuals and communities, enabling and empowering parishioners to play an effective role in setting priorities, designing services and influencing decisions to shape their local area.

Inclusion

- Undertake fair and impartial engagement to a high standard to ensure that all parishioners are offered equal opportunities to participate in issues that may affect them and make a difference.

Working together

- Act together when appropriate with a consistent approach to community engagement.
- Share knowledge and information openly with parishioners and partner organisations, whilst respecting confidentiality.
- Use what has been learnt from contact with local people to better understand and engage with the community, and to improve the services it delivers.

Keeping in touch

- Provide feedback and demonstrate the changes that are made as a result of engagement. The Council will use the following tools as appropriate to:

- a) Provide a 'suggestion box' in each village for residents to post their thoughts
- b) inform - posters, fliers and publications including Contact and the Annual Report - Public and specific meetings including Parish Council meetings, Annual Parish Meeting - Presentations, briefings. - Website updates, Email, social media
- c) consult - Questionnaires and surveys - Online surveys and e-consultation (via the internet). - community groups. - Discussion/focus groups/forums/e-forum. - Written consultation through letter or email. - Consultation events/workshops/ /exhibitions/general events - Public, neighbourhood or specific meetings - Documents or information available in offices, public buildings or online. - Verbal consultation with community representative acting as a scribe.
- d) Involve - Working parties - Public or specific targeted discussion meetings with interested parties - Public or stakeholder workshops to identify issues and shape options, - Public visioning events, ideas

competitions, interactive displays. - Online discussion forums. - Community led plans (e.g. parish plans/neighbourhood plans)/community action plans. - Comments and complaints.

Council Surgeries

LSAW PC will hold a combined Surgery ahead of each Parish Council meeting (where practical) with local PCSO's to provide an opportunity for local residents to meet with their Parish Councillors and/or PCSO's in person. Parish Councillors will be present to answer questions, discuss local issues and receive feedback on the work of the Parish Council.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic meetings are being held remotely via Zoom. A member of the parish council and/or an officer will be available online half an hour before the start of each meeting and will be able to rely any concerns to a PCSO following the meeting.

Newsletters

LSWA Parish Council commits to produce a quarterly newsletter to engage with parishioners and update on the work undertaken between the periods.

The Parish Council Office plays a neutral role so that residents can be confident that they are receiving impartial information and support

LAPLEY, STRETTON AND WHEATON ASTON PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2020

Contents

Introduction	12
1. General.....	12
2. Accounting and audit (internal and external).....	13
3. Annual estimates (budget) and forward planning.....	14
4. Budgetary control and authority to spend	15
5. Banking arrangements and authorisation of payments	15
6. Instructions for the making of payments.....	16
7. Payment of salaries.....	18
8. Loans and investments	18
9. Income	19
10. Orders for work, goods and services	19
11. Contracts.....	20
12. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works	21
13. Stores and equipment.....	21
14. Assets, properties and estates	21
15. Insurance.....	21
16. Charities	22
17. Risk management.....	22
18. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations	22

Introduction

These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on 5th September 2019

1. General

These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. Financial regulations are one of the council's three governing policy documents providing procedural guidance for members and officers. Financial regulations must be observed in conjunction with the council's standing orders² and any individual financial regulations relating to contracts.

The council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk.

The 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.

These financial regulations demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities and requirements.

At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the 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.

Members of council 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 councillor into disrepute.

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office to be appointed by the council. The Parish Council Manager has been appointed as RFO for this council and these regulations will 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 accounting control systems;
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
- maintains the accounting records of the council up to date in accordance with proper practices;
- assists the council to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of its resources; and
- produces financial management information as required by the council.

. The accounting records determined by the RFO shall be sufficient to show and explain the 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 council from time to time comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

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

² Model Standing Orders for Councils (2018 Edition) is available from NALC (©NALC 2018)

- entries from day to day of all sums of money received and expended by the 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 council; and
- wherever relevant, a record of the council's income and expenditure in relation to claims made, or to be made, for any contribution, grant or subsidy.

The accounting control systems determined by the RFO shall include:

- procedures to ensure that the financial transactions of the 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 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.

. The 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 council only.

. In addition, the council must:

- determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all 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.

1.15 A scheme of delegation is in place. This should be reviewed annually at the Annual meeting of the Parish Council

. 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 Councils - a Practitioners' Guide (England)* issued by the Joint Practitioners Advisory Group (JPAG), available from the websites of NALC and the Society for Local Council Clerks (SLCC).

1.17 COVID 19 Response. Due to the on going situation with the Coronavirus Pandemic the Coronavirus Act 2020 has been implemented. An additional scheme of delegated powers has been implement in the 'Infectious disease policy'

2. Accounting and audit (internal and external)

All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.

On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman [or a cheque signatory] shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the council.

. The RFO shall complete the annual statement of accounts, annual report, and any related documents of the 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 council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

. The 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 member of the council shall make available such documents and records as appear to the council to be 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 for that purpose.

. The internal auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work in relation to internal controls required by the council in accordance with proper practices.

. The internal auditor shall:

- be competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
- report to 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
- has no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the council

. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:

- perform any operational duties for the council;
- initiate or approve accounting 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.

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.

. 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.

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

3. Annual estimates (budget) and forward planning

[. Each committee (if any) shall review its three-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 Forward Planning and Finance Working Group not later than the end of November each year including any proposals for revising the forecast.

. The RFO must each year, by no later than January, 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 the Forward planning & Finance Working Group and the Council.

The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three 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.

The 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 member with a copy of the approved annual budget.

. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

4. Budgetary control and authority to spend

. Expenditure on revenue items may be authorised up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget. This authority is to be determined by:

- the council for all items over £5,000;
- the Parish Council Manager in conjunction with the Chairman for items below £5000; or
- the Parish Council Manager for any items below £500 providing there is sufficient budgetary provision, with the exception of regularly occurring payments such as salaries, in which case expenditure to the budgetary provision is permitted.

Such authority is to be evidenced by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the PCM, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.

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

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 council, or duly delegated committee.

During the budget year and with the approval of 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').

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

. The salary budgets are to be reviewed at least annually by the end of November, for the following financial year and such review shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the PCM and the Chairman of Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.

. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the PCM may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's 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 £1000. The PCM shall report such action to the chairman as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.

. No expenditure shall be authorised in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.

. All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

. The RFO shall regularly provide the 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 £1000 or [15%] of the budget.

. Changes in earmarked reserves shall be approved by council as part of the budgetary control process.

5. Banking arrangements and authorisation of payments

The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency. [The council shall seek credit references in respect of members or employees who act as signatories.]

. The RFO shall prepare a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting and, together with the relevant invoices, present the schedule to council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself shall authorise payment by a resolution of the council. The approved schedule shall be ruled off and initialled by the

Chairman of the Meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised. 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. . All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the RFO 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 council.

The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take all steps to pay all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available council meeting.

. The PCM and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise the payment of items only in the following circumstances:

- a) Payments within approved budgets up to the sum of £5000 in-conjunction with the Parish Council Chairman and up to £500 by the Parish Council Manager
- b) as per the Scheme of Delegation as appropriate
- c) 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 council, where the Clerk and RFO 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 council [or finance committee];
- b) 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 council [or finance committee]; or
- c) fund transfers within the 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 council.

For each financial year the PCM and RFO 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 council [,or a duly authorised committee,] may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or Finance Committee].

. A record of regular payments made under 5.6 above shall be drawn up and be signed by two members on each and every occasion when payment is authorised - thus controlling the risk of duplicated payments being authorised and / or made.

. In respect of grants the Council shall approve expenditure within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement approved by council. Any Revenue or Capital Grant in excess of £5,000 shall before payment, be subject to ratification by resolution of the council.

. Members are subject to the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the 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.

. The council will aim to rotate the duties of members in these Regulations so that onerous duties are shared out as evenly as possible over time.

. Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved in writing by a Member.

6. Instructions for the making of payments

. The council will make safe and efficient arrangements for the making of its payments.

. Following authorisation under Financial Regulation 5 above, the council, a duly delegated committee or, if so delegated, the PCM or RFO shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.

. All payments shall be affected by cheque or other instructions to the council's bankers, or otherwise, in accordance with a resolution of council.

. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to council or committee shall be signed by two members of council and countersigned by

the PCM in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment. A member who is a bank signatory, having a connection by virtue of family or business relationships with the beneficiary of a payment, should not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to the payment in question.

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.

. Cheques or orders for payment shall not normally be presented for signature other than at a council or committee meeting (including immediately before or after such a meeting). Any signatures obtained away from such meetings shall be reported to the council [or Finance Committee] at the next convenient meeting.

. If thought appropriate by the council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) and any National Non-Domestic Rates may be made by variable direct debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a variable direct debit shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

. If thought appropriate by the 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 members are retained and any payments are reported to council as made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

. If thought appropriate by the 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 council as made. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.

. If thought appropriate by the council payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence is retained showing which members approved the payment.

. 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.

. 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.

. 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.

. The council, and any members using computers for the council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.

. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Clerk [RFO] shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate approved by the council shall identify a number of 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.

. Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under "favourites"), and not through a search engine or e-mail link. Remembered or saved passwords facilities must not be used on any computer used for council banking work. Breach of this Regulation will be treated as a very serious matter under these regulations.

. Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier and supported by hard copy authority for change

signed by the PCM and a member. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers will be followed.

. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the PCM and Assistant Clerk and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £500 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.

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

. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the PCM and Assistant Clerk and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.

. The council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by the PCM (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

7. Payment of salaries

. As an employer, the 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 council, or duly delegated committee.

. 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 council meeting, as set out in these regulations above.

. No changes shall be made to any employee's pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the council

. 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:

a) by any councillor who can demonstrate a need to know;

b) by the internal auditor;

c) by the external auditor; or

d) by any person authorised under Audit Commission Act 1998, or any superseding legislation.

. 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.

An effective system of personal performance management should be maintained for the senior officers.

. Any termination payments shall be supported by a clear business case and reported to the council. Termination payments shall only be authorised by council.

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

8. Loans and investments

. All borrowings shall be affected in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The application for borrowing approval, and subsequent arrangements for the loan shall only be approved by full council.

. 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 council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council in respect of value for money for the proposed transaction.

- . The council will arrange with the council's banks and investment providers for the sending of a copy of each statement of account to the Chairman of the council at the same time as one is issued to the Clerk or RFO.
- . All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the council and shall be for a set period in accordance with council policy.
- . The 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 council at least annually.
- . All investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- . All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- . 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

- . The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- . Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the council.
- . The council will review all fees and charges at least annually, following a report of the PCM.
- . Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year.
- . All sums received on behalf of the council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- . The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- . Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- . 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.
- . Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the 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.
- . 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 council (to meet expenditure already incurred by the authority) will be given by the Managing Trustees of the charity meeting separately from any council meeting (see also Regulation 16 below).]

10. Orders for work, goods and services

- . 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.
- . Order books shall be controlled by the RFO.
- . All members 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 11.1 below.
- . A member may not issue an official order or make any contract on behalf of the council.
- . The RFO 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 RFO 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.

10.6. As a response to climate change LSWA PC has committed to follow a Climate and Biodiversity Policy and therefore will consider the location of all contractors before placing any orders with the view of reducing mileage and emissions

11. Contracts

. Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

- a) 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:
 - i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - iii. 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;
 - iv. for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the council;
 - v. for additional audit work of the external auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the PCM and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of council); and
 - vi. for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.
- b) Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) which is valued at £25,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations³.
- c) The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)⁴.
- d) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.
- e) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the PCM 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 PCM in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- f) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the PCM in the presence of at least one member of council.
- g) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Orders ‘Financial Controls and Procurements’ and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- h) When it is to enter into a contract of less than £25,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the PCM or RFO shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £5,000 and above £1000 the PCM or RFO shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10.3 above shall apply.
- i) The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- j) Should it occur that the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, provided that the specification does not change, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender,

³ The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

⁴ Thresholds currently applicable are:

- a) For public supply and public service contracts 209,000 Euros (£181,302)
- b) For public works contracts 5,225,000 Euros (£4,551,413)

estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.

12. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

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).

. 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 council.

Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the council and PCM to the contractor in writing, the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13. Stores and equipment

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

. 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.

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

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

14. Assets, properties and estates

. The PCM shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the 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.

. 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, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £1000.

. No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to 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).

. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to 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).

. Subject only to the limit set in Regulation 14.2 above, no tangible moveable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to council with a full business case.

. 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.

15. Insurance

. Following the annual risk assessment (per Regulation 17), the RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the council's insurers

The RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.

. 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 council at the next available meeting.

. All appropriate members 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 council, or duly delegated committee.

16. Charities

. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the PCM 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 PCM and RFO shall arrange for any audit or independent examination as may be required by Charity Law or any Governing Document.

17. Risk management

. The council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The PCM shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

. When considering any new activity, the PCM shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the council.

18. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

. It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time. The PCM shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these Financial Regulations.

. The council may, by resolution of the council duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of 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 members of council.

The Model Financial Regulations templates were produced by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in July 2019 for the purpose of its member councils and county associations. Every effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this document are correct at time of publication. NALC cannot accept responsibility for errors, omissions and changes to information subsequent to publication.

LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME | ASSESSMENT FORM

Name of council	Lapley Stretton and Wheaton Aston Parish Council
Name of assessor	
Date	

Instructions

Please place an X in the box corresponding to the appropriate outcome for each of the criteria. If any criteria are partially met then a comment is needed to explain this. Otherwise comments are optional. Please keep comments brief and constructive, as they will be provided as feedback to the council.

The Foundation Award

The council confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it publishes online:

Criteria	Met	Not met	Partially met and accepted	Partially met & not accepted	Comments
1) Its standing orders	X				Link to Standing Orders
2) Its financial regulations	X				Link to Financial Regulations
3) Its Code of Conduct and a link to councillors' registers of interests	X				Link to Code of Conduct Link to the Councillors Page showing their Registers of Interest
4) Its publication scheme	X				Link to Publication Scheme
5) Its last annual return	X				Link to the last annual return
6) Transparent information about council payments	X				Payments are usually published monthly in the appendix of the agenda and minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting. See example from January 2021 Link to January 2021 Agenda
7) A calendar of all meetings including the annual meeting of electors	X				Link to upcoming meetings including the Annual Parish Meeting.
8) Minutes for at least one year of full council meetings and (if relevant) all committee and sub-committee meetings	X				Link to Full Council meetings which included the minutes of going back at least one year. The Parish Council does not have committees or sub-committees
9) Current agendas	X				Link to the most recent agenda (12 January 2021)
10) The budget and precept information	X				Link to the budget for the next financial year (2021-2022)

Criteria	Met	Not met	Partially met and accepted	Partially met & not accepted	Comments
for the current or next financial year					
11) Its complaints procedure	X				Link to complaints procedure
12) Its accessibility statement	X				Link to the Accessibility Statement (Notice)
13) Its privacy notice	X				Link to the Privacy Notice
14) Council contact details and councillor information in line with the transparency code	X				Link to the Council contact details Link to the Councillors Page showing their information
15) Its action plan for the current year	X				Link to the current Action Plan
16) Evidence of consulting the community	X				Allotments consultation letter
17) Publicity advertising council activities	X				Link to News & Views Magazines
18) Evidence of participating in town and country planning	X				Minutes of the Meeting. For Example, Dec 2020 Minutes - Page 6 Agenda item 86. South Staffordshire District Council Planning Portal. See link attached to 21/00028/REM & 21/00076/FUL

The council also confirms by resolution at a full council meeting that it has:

Criteria	Met	Not met	Partially met and accepted	Partially met & not accepted	Comments
19) A risk management scheme	X				The Parish Council has a general Risk assessment (attached) and specific risk assessments for the following: -return to work during Covid-19 -re-opening of play areas during covid-19 - Litter Picker risk assessment

Criteria	Met	Not met	Partially met and accepted	Partially met & not accepted	Comments
					- Christmas Light Switch on risk assessment
20) A register of assets	X				The asset register is held on Edge Accounting Software which was last take to the Full Parish Council on 28 th May 2020
21) Contracts for all members of staff	X				
22) Up-to-date insurance policies that mitigate risks to public money	X				
23) Disciplinary and grievance procedures	X				
24) A policy for training and development of staff and councillors	X				
25) A record of all training undertaken by staff and councillors in the last year	X				
26) A clerk who has achieved 12 CPD points in the last year	X				See separate document detailing the Clerks CPD points for the