



Much Wenlock Town Council

Re-convened

Annual Town Council Meeting

22nd May 2025

Supporting Papers

Broseley and Much Wenlock Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT)

Update to Much Wenlock Town Council: 30/04/2025

Update on Police and SNT activity in the area. In addition to the Officers in the Safer Neighbourhood Team, there is a team of Response Officers based in Bridgnorth Police Station who attend incidents in the area.

Neighbourhood Matters. Neighbourhood Matters is an online messaging service operated by West Mercia Police. SNT Officers are sending Crime Alerts and other locally relevant information out to all those who join the service. Please encourage everyone to check out the service by following the link - <https://www.neighbourhoodmatters.co.uk/>

West Mercia Police has signed up to the Local Policing Community Charter. The Council has outlined its three main Policing Priorities for this period as:

Theft (from outbuildings). There have been no reported thefts from outbuildings, but a fuel drowser was taken from Wig Wig.

Anti-Social Behaviour. There has been one report of ASB this month.

Speeding. No reports of Speeding.

On a positive note, this month there have been very few reports for Wenlock and the surrounding areas. In summary, there was one report of shoplifting, one for assault, one emotional domestic and one report of witness intimidation. We had one application for Clare's law.

Road Traffic Issues:

An ANPR activation for a stolen vehicle and a two vehicle RTC.

Poor driving in Bourton, 200 boxes of eggs on the carriageway (Harley Bank) and a deer in Presthope.

The Safer Neighbourhood team have been involved in several operations and attended several community events, including dementia awareness and the opening of Willey Hall kitchen.

West Mercia Police are in the process of consultation with PCSO's in relation to a change to their shift pattern. The current proposal is that PCSO's will no longer work past 20:00 hours, our second meeting has been postponed due to the local elections, date to be confirmed.

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the TOWN COUNCIL MEETING held at The Guildhall, Much Wenlock at 7 pm on Thursday, 3rd April 2025

Present: Councillors William Benbow, Susan Crooke-Williams, David Fenwick, Wilfred Grainger, John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans (in the chair), Daniel Thomas and Chris Tyler.

In attendance: Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk, Revd Matthew Stafford, PCSO Helen Scott, PCSO Mal Goddard, two members of the public in person and three remotely.

1. Mayor's Welcome

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave the following report:

"It is normal for Town Council activity to be quieter in the run up to elections. That doesn't mean that we're not still busy with ongoing projects.

The Guildhall restoration project's first phase of the National Lottery Heritage Fund application is moving on and will meet its May deadline.

Much Wenlock experienced chaos when the contractor repairing the Gaskell Corner closed the road two hours early, coinciding with rush hour traffic. This reinforces the need for strong community, Town Council and Shropshire Council liaison.

There are strong indications that a number of applications for the development of solar "farms" will be forthcoming in the near future. It does feel as though the town is at a critical moment with the changes that will be experienced through all the proposed developments in the area. I'm sure this council will be closely involved with all consultations.

The Guildhall reopens to the public this weekend and a Made in Shropshire market takes place on 19th April; let's hope for lively trading in the town this spring.

I had the honour of attending and presenting medals at the Wenlock Olympian Live Arts Festival, a very enjoyable couple of days. It was wonderful to see such talent, enthusiasm and dedication in local young people.

Another eye opener for me, when attending the Lady Forester Care Home tea party, was to look round the recent new build and extension of the home, a very impressive facility and one that is not fully appreciated.

Finally, this is the last Council meeting before the elections on 1st May. It is the last one of this Council and, sadly, we will be losing five Councillors. I would like to record thanks to all of you for your co-operation, hard work, dedication and friendship and wish you all the best in your next chapter. The good news is that all six Councillors seeking re-election plus two new nominees have been accepted, thus leaving three vacancies. This will lead to a co-option process, which the Town Clerk will detail later."

2. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Toon – work commitment, Councillor White – other engagement, Councillor West – caring responsibility.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

Members were reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the register of members' interests maintained by the monitoring officer.

4. Dispensations

None requested.

5. Public Session

There had been no requests to speak.

6. Police Matters

The Mayor welcomed PCSO Helen Scott and PCSO Mal Goddard. Councillors noted the written update from the local policing team. In addition, PCSO Goddard reported that West Mercia Police had proposed earlier in the week that the working day for PCSOs should end at 20.00 hrs instead of 22.00 hrs. A review of how policing was delivered across West Mercia was being undertaken and this proposal was currently at the consultation stage. However, this change would have an impact on operations, including attendance at Parish Council meetings. Members noted that the proposal would not improve the service offered and appeared to be purely a cost saving measure. The earliest the change could take effect would be in the summer.

The local team were asked to provide a written briefing on the proposals for consideration at the next full Council meeting.

The police officers were thanked for attending and left the meeting.

7. Wenlock Forester Trust

- a. The Mayor welcomed Mr Mark Laws to the meeting. Mr Laws provided a short update on the Wenlock Forester Trust, formerly known as the Much Wenlock Forester Charitable Trust.

The Trust was formed in February 2011 following the sale of the the Lady Forester Nursing Home by ExtraCare to David and Jennifer English. ExtraCare made a contribution of £250,000 back to the Much Wenlock community to recognise the money and effort local residents had invested in the facility in 1996. The Town Council facilitated the formation of the Trust by way of a working group composed of local residents and Councillors. Currently there are six Trustees who meet four times a year.

The Trust's Objectives read: to relieve financial hardship, sickness and poor health amongst elderly people resident in the area of benefit, including the funding and/or provision of specially designed or adapted housing and items, services or facilities calculated to relieve the needs of such persons. NB: the "area of benefit" is Much Wenlock and surrounding areas and the county of Shropshire.

The original £250,000 was invested and now stands at just over £360,000 which includes two legacies received amounting to £120,000. There have been 80 grants given since the Trust's formation to the value of £151,655, an average grant of £1,896. This included by far the largest grant of £50,000 recently given to the Friendly Bus at Broseley to help them purchase a replacement minibus.

Mr Laws gave an overview of the many donations made to organisations in Much Wenlock and further afield, including £10,000 towards the tarmac path around the Gaskell Recreation Ground, as well as a small number of individual grants. Councillors were encouraged to let the Trust know if they were aware of any need among elderly people locally.

Mr Laws confirmed that he would very much like to continue as the Town Council Trustee for a further four years.

- b. Members noted that the Town Council has the right to nominate one Trustee to the Wenlock Forester Trust for a four-year term. **It was RESOLVED to nominate Mr Mark Laws as the Council's Trustee on the Wenlock Forester Trust for a further four-year term from May 2025.**

Thanks were expressed to Mr Laws for his work to date and continued service.

8. Shropshire Council Report

Shropshire Councillor, Daniel Thomas, presented the following report:

"Repairs to the surface at the Gaskell Arms Junction: the Gaskell Arms Junction has been repaired free of charge by the Council's Highways Partner Kier, as it was under guarantee. I have placed a complaint regarding the contractor starting two hours earlier than was agreed upon and await an update.

Double Yellow Lines: Sheinton Street has had its double yellow lines re-marked to reflect the results of December's public consultation. These changes reduce parking but are designed to improve traffic flow, meaning vehicles won't mount the pavement as much. Bridge Road and Southfield Road improvements have been delayed and I have chased for an update.

High Street Drainage: work to replace the wrongly fitted gully cover is taking place on Sunday. Shropshire Council changed the wrong one, which opened up the Severn Trent Water sewer. The correct cover, designed to take in more water to help in flood events, will be placed on the correct drain.

Thank you: I just wanted to place on record, in my capacity as Shropshire Councillor, my thanks to the Town Council for an excellent working relationship over the past four years.

In response to a question about double yellow lines in St Mary's Lane, Councillor Thomas replied that the lining work was being carried out in stages due to financial constraints and there was further work to complete.

9. Minutes

- a. It was **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 6th March 2025.
- b. It was **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the minutes of the Extraordinary Town Council meeting held on 6th March 2025.
- c. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of a Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 4th February 2025.
- d. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of a Finance & Asset Management Committee meeting held on 21st January 2025.
- e. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the minutes of a HR Committee meeting held on 12th November 2024.

10. Error in Meeting Schedule

The Clerk advised that there was an error in the published meeting schedule and that the Finance & Asset Management Committee meeting scheduled for 22nd May would not take place until a later date.

11. Town Clerk's Report

Members noted the written and verbal report from the Town Clerk.

12. Internal Audit Report

Members reviewed the interim internal audit report 2024/25 and noted the responses proposed by the Finance & Asset Management Committee. **It was RESOLVED to approve the responses to the interim internal audit 2024/25 recommended by the Finance & Asset Management Committee.**

13. Local Council Elections 2025

Members noted the Statement of Persons Nominated for the Town Council. Eight persons had been nominated for the Town Council so there would be an uncontested election. The Council would need to co-opt to fill the remaining three vacancies.

There were five nominations for the Shropshire Council election, which would be contested.

14. Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan Review

Councillor Thomas introduced the Steering Group's second draft Neighbourhood Plan, which was based on the extensive consultation and drop-in sessions held and had been altered to reflect the views of the community. He stated that the Neighbourhood Plan was a crucial opportunity for the community to shape the future of the town, giving the community and the Council a stronger say, particularly in light of increasing national targets. The Council's external consultant, Alison Eardley, had been fantastic in guiding the Steering Group through the legal challenges and Councillor Thomas wished to place on record his thanks to the members of the Steering Group and the community for engaging with the Neighbourhood Plan review.

Members reviewed the Submission Version of the draft Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan 2024 to 2038 prepared by the Steering Group. It was noted that there were some minor errors in the draft.

It was proposed by Councillor Tyler, seconded by Councillor O'Dowd and unanimously **RESOLVED, subject to minor alterations of fact, to submit the draft Much Wenlock Neighbourhood Plan 2024 – 2038 to Shropshire Council for the next stage of the review process.**

Councillor Thomas thanked Councillors for their support. He advised that the draft Plan would now go to Shropshire Council for review and further consultation before a referendum in the early autumn.

15. Shropshire Local Plan Review

There had been no changes with regard to the Shropshire Local Plan Review. Due to the pre-election purdah period, it was not possible for Shropshire Council to withdraw the Plan until after the elections. One of the first items of business for Shropshire Council after the local elections would be a decision to withdraw the Local Plan.

16. The Guildhall Project

Councillor Themans gave an update on progress with the Guildhall project. Several meetings had been held during the last month, including with Greenwood Projects earlier in the day. The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) application process was complicated, and the projected budget was increasing. Other sources of match funding would be explored. Letters of support were being garnered from various stakeholders. The working group would be engaging with the NLHF support officer in the next few weeks to seek advice and the application would be submitted by the end of May, after presentation to full Council for agreement.

17. Loss of Electricity to STAR Housing Homes in Much Wenlock during High Winds in December

There had been no further response from STAR Housing to contact from the Clerk regarding the provision of emergency support to residents during the power outage in December and future emergency provision. The Clerk had sent a reminder to STAR Housing.

18. Signage for Windmill Hill

Members considered the provision of small signs to mark the entrances to the Local Nature Reserve at Windmill Hill. **It was RESOLVED to agree a budget of £200 for the purchase of signage to mark the entrances to the Local Nature Reserve at Windmill Hill.**

19. VE Day Celebration 2025

Councillor Crooke-Williams updated Members on plans for a VE Day celebration in May 2025. A church service would be held on Thursday, 8th May, starting at 8.45pm, with a beacon lighting at 9.30pm on the church green. A flag would be erected on the church at 9am and the bells would be rung at 6.30pm, in accordance with instructions from the Bell Ringers Council. A special flag would be flown for 24 hours and the peace lamp from last year would be lit.

On the afternoon of Sunday, 11th May there would be a family celebration on the church green, with Caroline Crystal singing, a children's disco and a children's fancy dress competition. Traders would be asked for prizes. There would also be a fish and chip van on site, as fish and chips were not rationed during the war. All was in hand and the next planning meeting would be held on 8th April.

20. Consultation

Members considered consultation on the removal of BT payphones across the county, including the payphone located in the Square in Much Wenlock. Members noted that this payphone was surrounded by shops and residential properties and in case of emergency, shopkeepers or residents could be asked for help with a phone call.

It was RESOLVED to submit no objection to the removal of the public payphone and the phone box in the Square.

The Clerk was asked to enquire about possible retention of the electricity supply to the box by the Town Council.

21. Devolution

Members received a briefing note on Devolution issued by Shropshire Council on 18th March 2025. It was noted that Shropshire Council would not be affected by devolution proposals in the next two years but that the authority was already considering options for the future with its neighbours.

22. Correspondence

Members noted the following items, which they had received by email between meetings:

- a. SALC information bulletins and other information
- b. NALC newsletters and other information
- c. Selected press releases from Shropshire Council
- d. Rural Bulletins from the Rural Services Network
- e. VCSA Shropshire newsletters
- f. The Rural Services Network Bulletins and Rural Funding Digest
- g. Marches Energy Agency newsletter
- h. Selected Neighbourhood Matters alerts
- i. Mailings from The Edge Arts Centre
- j. Correspondence from Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust
- k. Friendly Bus Newsletter
- l. Mailings from Visit Shropshire
- m. Neighbourhood Matters police mailings
- n. Helicopter Liaison Group Newsletter from RAF Shawbury
- o. Invitation to Shrewsbury Moves Festival and Conference

23. Agenda items for next Town Council meeting

Members were invited to suggest items for inclusion on the agenda of the next meeting: Police proposals for PCSO working hours.

24. Date of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be Mayor Making, to be held on Thursday, 15th May 2025 at 7.00pm at the Guildhall, Wilmore Street, Much Wenlock.

25. Library Lease

There was no further information to hand on proposals for renewal of the lease for the Library premises.

The meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

Signed Mayor Date

DRAFT

30/24

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a **Planning & Environment Committee meeting**
held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 4th March 2025 at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock

Present: Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick, Wilfred Grainger, Daniel Thomas, Chris Tyler.

In attendance: Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk

1. Apologies

Councillor Linda West

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

Members were reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

Councillor Tyler declared a pecuniary interest in applications 25/00259/ADV and 25/00269/LBC.

3. Dispensations

None requested.

4. Public Session

There were no members of the public present.

5. Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 4th February 2025 be **APPROVED** and signed as a true record.

6. Planning Applications

Members considered the following application and resolved to respond as noted:

25/00246/TCA Holy Trinity Church, Wilmore Street, Much Wenlock	Works to 13no Trees (See Schedule) within Much Wenlock Conservation Area. It was RESOLVED no objection.
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Having declared a pecuniary interest in the following applications, Councillor Tyler left the room.

25/00259/ADV The George And Dragon, 2 High Street, Much Wenlock	Signage and lighting It was RESOLVED no objection.
25/00269/LBC The George And Dragon, 2 High Street, Much Wenlock	Refresh signage It was RESOLVED no objection.

Councillor Tyler returned to the meeting.

25/00583/TCA 3 St Owens Drive, Much Wenlock	Fell 1no Lawson Cypress within Much Wenlock Conservation Area It was RESOLVED no objection.
25/00675/TCA 10 - 11 St Marys Lane, Much Wenlock	Fell 1no Norway Spruce within Much Wenlock Conservation Area It was RESOLVED no objection.

7. Planning Decisions

There were no planning decisions to hand.

31/24

8. Farley Quarry

Members considered correspondence from Axis, on behalf of Cartwrights, regarding proposed development at Farley Quarry.

It was RESOLVED to thank the correspondent for updating the Town Council on progress with the prospective application for development at Farley Quarry and to await submission of the planning application, stating that Councillors anticipated a future site visit.

9. Draft Shropshire Local Plan Review 2016 – 2038

Shropshire Council had responded to the Planning Inspectors findings on 12th February 2025 and a reply was awaited from the Inspectors. No further progress would be made with the Review until a response was received from the Inspectors.

10. Neighbourhood Plan Review

A meeting of the Steering Group was scheduled for the following day when feedback from the public consultation would be discussed.

11. Flooding Matters

- a. The Strategic Flood Working Group had nothing to report.
- b. Members considered an update on the assessment of potential flood risk from Shadwell Quarry. They noted that representatives of the Environment Agency (EA) had visited Shadwell Quarry on 5th February and the Clerk had requested a copy of the report from the meeting.
- c. Other flooding matters:
 - replacement of an incorrectly fitted manhole cover in the High Street was still awaited.
 - the drain gulper would be visiting Much Wenlock on 19th March to target drains in the High Street, Wilmore Street, Queen Street and Back Lane.
 - Councillor Benbow was asked to convey comments on drainage at the Callaughtons Ash development to Shropshire Council's Drainage and Flood Risk Manager.
 - Councillor Thomas was asked to press Shropshire Council's Drainage and Flood Risk Manager for a written update on the use of DfT funds for flood alleviation on Bourton Road.

12. Transport and Highways Matters

Councillors received a report from the Transport Working Group. Councillor Tyler and the Council's transport consultant had attended a public consultation event for the Tasley Garden Village development, organised by the developers, Bloor Homes and Taylor Wimpey. The developers' transport specialist appeared to be unaware of the situation regarding the Gaskell corner and the Visum study previously carried out. It was noted that the Gaskell corner would be significantly impacted by the additional housing now proposed for Tasley Garden Village. Councillor Thomas had already spoken to the responsible highways officer at Shropshire Council regarding further monies from the extended development for work to the Gaskell corner.

It was noted that some elements of the proposed parking regulations scheme for Much Wenlock had been downgraded and details of the roads affected would be provided in due course.

13. Climate Change and Ecological/Nature Emergencies*

The Clerk reported that she had attended the 'Climate Fresk' workshop arranged by Plastic Free Wenlock and supported by the Town Council at the Priory Hall on 22nd February. There had been 10 participants at the event and two facilitators. The workshop had involved the participants setting out and discussing a collage of information cards to raise awareness of climate change, its causes and effects. The Clerk advised that a biodiversity Fresk could also be provided, and she had requested details.

A call for volunteers to join the new verge restoration working group had been included in the March edition of the Wenlock Herald

14. Street Lighting ***15. Street Naming *****16. Footpath/Bridleway Creation Orders*****17. Footpath Diversion Orders***

18. Road Closures*

Members noted the following road closures:

- a. Location: A458 Much Wenlock
Date/Time: Thursday, 20th – Friday, 21st March 2025, 20.00 – 06.00
Purpose: Remedial works to carriageway
Agency: Shropshire Council
- b. Location: Unnamed road between Homer & A4169
Date/Time: Monday, 28th April 2025, 9.30 – 14.30
Purpose: For safe access of underground structure for civils work for laying duct
Agency: Openreach
- c. Location: B4371 Stretton Road, Much Wenlock
Date/Time: Monday, 14th April – Tuesday, 15th April 2025, 9.30 – 16.00
Purpose: Remedial resurfacing works
Agency: Shropshire Council

19. Tree Preservation Orders*

20. Stopping Up Orders*

21. Speed Limit Orders*

22. Prohibition Orders*

23. Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 1st April 2025 at 7.00 pm at the Corn Exchange, High Street, Much Wenlock.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act and due to the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted it was RESOLVED that the public and press should not be present.

24. Planning Enforcement

Members noted an update on enforcement matters. The Clerk was asked to pursue an enforcement matter with the responsible Shropshire Council planning officer.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Signed.....(Chairperson)

Date.....

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a **Planning & Environment Committee meeting**
held at 7.00 pm on Tuesday, 1st April 2025 at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock

Present: Councillors William Benbow, David Fenwick, Wilfred Grainger, Daniel Thomas, Chris Tyler.

In attendance: Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk

1. Apologies

None received.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

Members were reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

3. Dispensations

None requested.

4. Public Session

There were no members of the public present.

5. Minutes

It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting held on 4th March 2025 be APPROVED and signed as a true record.

6. Planning Applications

Members considered the following application and resolved to respond as noted:

25/01056/FUL 5 Shrewsbury Road, Much Wenlock	Erection of single storey extension, replacement of all existing windows, refurbishment and re-tiling of roof, groundworks, creation of driveway and parking area following demolition of the store/garage It was RESOLVED no objection.
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7. Planning Decisions

Members noted the following planning decision:

25/00246/TCA Holy Trinity Church, Wilmore Street, Much Wenlock	Works to 13no Trees (see schedule) within Much Wenlock Conservation Area. Decision: Consent by Right - Trees
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8. Telford & Wrekin Local Plan Review

Members noted that the publication version of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan Review (2020-2040), the final public review stage, was available for public comments until 4pm on Monday 5th May 2025.

It was RESOLVED that the Transport Working Group should review the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan with reference to the impact on Much Wenlock and draft a response for consideration at the next Planning Committee meeting on 29th April 2025.

9. Tasley Neighbourhood Plan

Members noted informal consultation on the Tasley Neighbourhood Plan between 7th March and 18th April 2025.

It was RESOLVED to submit no comments.

10. Correspondence from Marrons

Members considered correspondence from Marrons on behalf of Boningale Developments. **It was RESOLVED to request an informal meeting with Councillors.**

11. Flooding Matters

- The Strategic Flood Working Group had nothing to report.

34/24

- b. Members considered an update on the assessment of potential flood risk from Shadwell Quarry. The formal report from the Environment Agency visit to the quarry on 5th February 2025 was still awaited.
- c. Other flooding matters:
 - replacement of an incorrectly fitted manhole cover in the High Street was still outstanding.
 - an update on the use of DfT funds for flood alleviation on the Bourton Road was still awaited.
 Councillor Benbow had pressed for a response.

12. Transport and Highways Matters

- a. There was nothing to report from the Transport Working Group. Councillors noted that there had been no update on the Gaskell corner feasibility study.
- b. Members noted comments from Shropshire Council Highways regarding pothole repairs in the town. Due to an extensive backlog of works, no date could be given for repairs.

13. Climate Change and Ecological/Nature Emergencies*

Members noted an article from Shropshire Council on the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

14. Street Lighting *

15. Street Naming *

16. Footpath/Bridleway Creation Orders*

17. Footpath Diversion Orders*

Members reported that the former route of the footpath at Atterley had been closed but the new route had not been waymarked. The Clerk was asked to report this to Shropshire Council's Rights of Way officer.

18. Road Closures*

Members noted the following road closures:

- a. Location: High Street, Much Wenlock
 Date/Time: Saturday, 19th April 2025, 06.30 – 16.30
 Purpose: Made in Shropshire Market
 Agency: Much Wenlock Town Council
- b. Location: Stretton Road, Much Wenlock
 Date/Time: Monday 14th to Tuesday, 15th April 2025, 9.30am to 4.00pm
 Purpose: Carriageway surface repair work
 Agency: Kier / Shropshire Highways
- c. **Update**
 Location: Oakfield Park, Much Wenlock
 Date/Time: 28th April to 27th June 2025, all the time
 Road will only be closed from 28/04/25 - 30/05, all other works will be carried out without a closure
 Purpose: Gas replacement works
 Agency: Cadent

19. Tree Preservation Orders*

20. Stopping Up Orders*

21. Speed Limit Orders*

22. Prohibition Orders*

23. Date of Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday, 29th April 2025 at 7.00 pm at the Guildhall, High Street, Much Wenlock.

PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act and due to the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted it was RESOLVED that the public and press should not be present.

35/24

24. Planning Enforcement

Members noted the response from the enforcement officer and an update on enforcement matters. The Clerk was asked to respond with comments from Councillors.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.

Signed.....(Chairperson)

Date.....

07/24

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of an extraordinary
HR COMMITTEE MEETING
held at the Corn Exchange, Much Wenlock
at 5.45 pm on Tuesday, 25th March 2025

Present: Councillors David Fenwick, John O'Dowd, Marcus Themans and Daniel Thomas (in the chair)

In attendance: Trudi Barrett – Town Clerk

1. Apologies

None, all Councillors were present.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

Members were reminded that they are required to leave the room during the discussion and voting on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, whether or not the interest is entered in the Register of Members' Interests maintained by the Monitoring Officer.

3. Dispensations

None requested.

4. Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the extraordinary HR Committee meeting held on 12th November 2024.

5. Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting would be called as required.

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the above Act it was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the public and press should not be present.

6. Staff Appraisals and End of Probationary Period Review

Members noted that the Clerk's appraisal had been completed in December 2024.

The Guildhall Custodian's appraisal had been carried out in October 2024 and she had now completed her probationary period. It was **RESOLVED** to confirm the permanent employment of the Guildhall Custodian.

7. Overtime

Members noted the report on the Clerk's overtime. It was **RESOLVED** to pay the Clerk for overtime hours owed.

8. Annual Leave

It was **RESOLVED** to allow the Clerk and RFO to carry over annual leave remaining from the 2024/25 leave year into the 2025/26 leave year.

9. Council Office Staffing

Members considered the report on office staffing.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the recruitment of an additional Administrative Assistant for the Town Council for 15 hours per week.

The Clerk was asked to prepare the required documentation and commence the recruitment process.

The meeting closed at 6.15 pm.

Signed:Chairperson

Date:

Much Wenlock Town Council

Agenda item 12



Schedule of meetings 2025-2026

	MAY 2025	JUNE 2025	JULY 2025	AUG 2025	SEPT 2025	OCT 2025	NOV 2025	DEC 2025	JAN 2026	FEB 2026	MAR 2026	APRIL 2026	MAY 2026
TOWN COUNCIL <i>Thursday</i> <i>Thursday – re-convened</i> Commencing 7 pm	ATCM 15 22	5	10*		4	2	6	4	8	5	5	2	ATCM 7 14
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE <i>Tuesday</i> Commencing 7 pm		10*	1 29		2 30		4	2	6	3	3 31		5
FINANCE & ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE <i>Thursday</i> Commencing 7 pm		19	24		11	16	20		15		12		21
HR COMMITTEE <i>As required</i>													
GASKELL RECREATION GROUND (charity) <i>Thursday</i>		?						?					
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING <i>Thursday</i> <i>(Meeting of electors of the parish)</i>												16	

- As committees will not be appointed until 5th June
- Clerk unable to attend on 3rd July. RFO could clerk meeting on 3rd July, but would rather not!

Full Council meetings are held in the Guildhall. Committee meetings may be held in the Guildhall or Corn Exchange.

Council meetings are open to members of the public who may speak about items included on the agenda, at the discretion of the Chairman, during the time set aside for public participation.

Agendas for meetings are posted on the Council's notice board at the Corn Exchange and can also be viewed on the Council's website.

Much Wenlock Town Council

Corn Exchange, 62 High Street, Much Wenlock, Shropshire TF13 6AE

Tel: 01952 727509

Email: townclerk@muchwenlock-tc.gov.uk

Website: www.muchwenlock-tc.gov.uk

Much Wenlock Town Council

FINANCE AND ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEEFor Review 22nd May 2025

	TERMS OF REFERENCE
Membership	At least SIX Members of the Town Council
Quorum	FOUR Members of the Committee
Authority	Local Government Act 1972, Sections 101 and 102
Conditions	<p>The Council's Standing Orders will apply to all meetings of the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee shall be appointed on an annual basis at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council. The first order of business of the first meeting of the Committee after its annual appointment will be to elect a Chairperson.</p> <p>Unless the Council directs otherwise, the Committee may arrange to devolve any of its functions to a Sub-Committee or to Officers of the Council.</p> <p>The Committee will usually meet bi-monthly between December and August and monthly in September, October and November for budget preparation.</p> <p>Once approved, the minutes will be presented to the next meeting of the Town Council, for noting only.</p> <p>Meetings shall be open to the public unless the Committee feels it appropriate to exclude the press and public for specific items in pursuance of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.</p> <p>Members of the Committee will receive an agenda and supporting papers in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders. Other members of the Council will receive an agenda only, sent via email.</p> <p>Notice of meetings will be posted in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.</p>
Restrictions	<p>Only Members of the Committee may vote on agenda items.</p> <p>Non-Members of the Committee may attend Committee meetings and will only be allowed to speak on an agenda item with the agreement of the Chairman.</p> <p>Non-Members of the Committee are subject to the same rules as Committee Members regarding confidentiality and the requirements of the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Non-Members of the Committee have no more rights at Committee meetings than members of the public.</p>

Much Wenlock Town Council

FINANCE AND ASSET MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Responsibilities		Powers
1	To consider the annual draft budget and recommend the draft precept to full Council.	No delegated powers.
2	To monitor and authorise all income and expenditure.	Delegated authority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor income and expenditure. Authorise all payments.
3	To review and approve cemetery fees on an annual basis.	Delegated authority to set fees for the purchase of burial plots and memorials and resolve any cemetery issues that officers are unable to deal with.
4	To vire funds between budget headings within the approved budget, except from staff costs, and bring forward funds from reserves as necessary.	Delegated authority to vire funds between budget headings EXCEPT from the budget for staff costs. Funds vired from reserves must not exceed £25,000 without the approval of the Town Council.
5	To consider contracts for work.	Delegated authority to award contracts up to £10,000.
6	To review the Council's Asset Register and insurance on an annual basis and ensure that the Council's property is adequately insured	Delegated authority to oversee insurance of the Council's property.
7	To consider the Internal Audit report, and report findings and recommendations to full Council.	Delegated authority to review the Internal Audit.
8	To consider all grant applications received.	Delegated authority to award grants in accordance with the Council's 'Grants Policy'.
9	To ensure that PAYE, NI and pension payments are appropriately deducted from employees' salaries and paid to HMRC as required by law.	Delegated authority to ensure that the Council complies with HMRC and pension requirements.
10	To monitor financial risk and ensure that adequate financial risk management is in place.	Delegated authority to ensure adequate financial risk management is in place.
11	To determine and keep under regular review the bank mandate for all Council bank accounts.	Delegated authority to review the Council's banking arrangements and make recommendations to full Council.
12	To monitor risk management and ensure that health and safety requirements are met.	Delegated authority to manage risk, health and safety.
13	To oversee the management of all of the Council's property, assets and archives.	Delegated authority to ensure that the Council's property is properly managed.
14	To contribute to the development of the Town Council's Strategic Plan.	No delegated powers.

The Committee may not approve:

- setting the final budget or the precept
- borrowing
- writing off bad debts
- declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence
- the Council's banking arrangements and investments
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors
- the Annual Governance and Accountability Return
- procurement or award of a public supply contract or public service contract valued at over £30,000.

These shall be determined by full Council only.

Much Wenlock Town Council
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

For review 22nd May 2025

	TERMS OF REFERENCE
Membership:	At least FIVE Members of the Town Council
Quorum:	Three Members of the Committee
Authority:	<p>Local Government Act 1972, Sections 101 and 102</p> <p>In an area that has a parish council, the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 provides for the parish council to take the lead role in neighbourhood planning.</p> <p>In pursuance of the Localism Act 2011 Schedule 38A (9) and Regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 Shropshire Council made (adopted) the Neighbourhood Plan for Much Wenlock on 17 July 2014.</p>
Conditions:	<p>The Council's Standing Orders will apply to all meetings of the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee shall be appointed on an annual basis at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council. The first order of business of the first meeting of the Committee after its annual appointment will be to elect a Chairperson.</p> <p>Unless the Council directs otherwise, the Committee may arrange to devolve any of its functions to a sub-committee or to Officers of the Council.</p> <p>The Committee will meet monthly on the Tuesday preceding full Council meetings unless otherwise determined.</p> <p>Once approved, the minutes will be presented to the next meeting of the Town Council, for noting only.</p> <p>Meetings shall be open to the public unless the Committee feels it appropriate to exclude the press and public for specific items in pursuance of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.</p> <p>Members of the Committee will receive an agenda and supporting papers in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders. Other members of the Council will receive an agenda only, sent via email.</p> <p>Notice of meetings will be posted in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.</p>
Restrictions:	<p>Only Members of the Committee may vote on agenda items.</p> <p>Non-Members of the Committee may attend Committee meetings and will only be allowed to speak on an agenda item with the agreement of the Chairman.</p> <p>Non-Members of the Committee are subject to the same rules as Committee Members regarding confidentiality and the requirements of the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Non-Members of the Committee have no more rights at Committee meetings than members of the public.</p>

Much Wenlock Town Council
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

	Responsibilities	Powers
1	To consider and formulate responses to applications made to Shropshire Council and other regulatory bodies for planning permission relating to land and property within the parish or such applications deemed to have an impact on the parish e.g. Full, Outline, Reserved Matters, Listed Buildings, Conservation Area issues, Advertisement Consent and Street Naming.	Delegated authority to respond to all planning matters. Contentious and significant applications will be referred to full Council for consideration and approval.
2	Consider and formulate responses to applications made to Shropshire Council and other regulatory bodies, such as the Environment Agency, for permission of an environmental nature relating to land and property within the parish or such applications deemed to have an impact on the parish e.g. tree felling, tree maintenance.	Delegated authority to respond to applications.
3	Consider and formulate responses to any proposals by the Local Planning Authority to make Tree Preservation Orders.	Delegated authority to respond.
4	Consider responses to the Government's Planning Inspectorate and other appropriate bodies either in support or against planning and enforcement appeals made by the owners and developers of land and property and if considered appropriate, authorise the attendance of Members and/or Officers and the engagement of professional representation at Local Inquiries or Hearings into such appeals.	Committee to have the power to resolve unless otherwise directed by the Council.
5	Consider and formulate responses to any proposals by Shropshire Council or Government with respect to the stopping up, diversion, maintenance or creation of public rights of way within the Parish.	Delegated authority to respond.
6	Consider and formulate responses to any proposals by Shropshire Council or Government with respect to footpath/bridleway creation orders, highway adoption orders and other highway notices.	Delegated authority to respond.
7	Consider and recommend responses to any proposals by Shropshire Council with respect to street naming within the parish.	Delegated authority to respond.
8	Consider and respond to minor correspondence.	Delegated authority to respond.
9	Consider and formulate responses to proposals by the Highway Authority with respect to highway and traffic regulation issues and orders.	Committee to have the power to resolve unless otherwise directed by the Council.
10	Make representations to any outside agency as deemed necessary in order to promote and encourage sustainable development within the Parish.	Committee to have the power to resolve unless otherwise directed by the Council.
11	To monitor and consult on the Neighbourhood Plan and advise the Town Council on whether the Plan is meeting its objectives with the ultimate aim of informing the review of the Plan.	Committee to report findings to the Town Council.
12	To work with Shropshire Council to encourage appropriate development and ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan's objectives are being met.	Committee to report findings to the Town Council.
13	To work with Shropshire Council to monitor housing development numbers during the Plan period to provide evidence to feed into any formal review of the Plan.	Committee to report findings to the Town Council.
14	To respond to matters relevant to Much Wenlock's designation as a Rapid Response Flood Catchment area, undertake a review of contingent arrangements in relation to possible flood events, and raise awareness within the local community of flood related issues.	Committee to review contingent arrangements and work with the community to raise awareness of flood related issues in Much Wenlock.
15	To contribute to the development of the Town Council's Strategic Plan.	Committee to report proposals to the Town Council.
16	To delegate areas of responsibility to either a sub-committee or to an officer.	Committee to have the power to delegate.

Much Wenlock Town Council

HR COMMITTEE**For review by full Council 22nd May 2025**

	TERMS OF REFERENCE
Membership	FOUR Members of the Town Council
Quorum	THREE Members of the Committee
Authority	Local Government Act 1972, Sections 101 and 102
Conditions	<p>The Council's Standing Orders will apply to all meetings of the Committee.</p> <p>The Committee shall be appointed on an annual basis at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council. The first order of business of the first meeting of the Committee after its annual appointment will be to elect a Chairperson.</p> <p>Unless the Council directs otherwise, the Committee may arrange to devolve any of its functions to a Sub-Committee or to Officers of the Council.</p> <p>The Committee will meet as required.</p> <p>Once approved the minutes will be presented to the next meeting of the Town Council, for noting only.</p> <p>Due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it may be necessary to hold meetings in private in pursuance of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.</p> <p>Members of the Committee will receive an agenda and supporting papers in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders. Other members of the Council will receive an agenda only, sent via email.</p> <p>Notice of meetings will be posted in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.</p>
Restrictions	<p>Only Members of the Committee may vote on agenda items.</p> <p>Non-Members of the Committee may attend Committee meetings and will only be allowed to speak on an agenda item with the agreement of the Chairman.</p> <p>Non-Committee Members are subject to the same rules as Committee Members regarding confidentiality and the requirements of the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Non-Members of the Committee have no more rights at Committee meetings than members of the public.</p>

Much Wenlock Town Council

HR COMMITTEE

	Responsibilities	Powers
1	To appoint staff as required to carry out the decisions and functions of the Town Council.	Committee to have the power to resolve the appointment of all staff except the appointment of a Town Clerk, which, by recommendation of this Committee, must be approved by full Council.
2	To deal with all employee issues except those referred to the Disciplinary & Grievance Panel and the Appeals Panel.	Committee to have the power to resolve employee issues except those referred to the Discipline & Grievance Panel and the Appeals Panel.
3	To investigate complaints about council administration and procedures.	Committee to have the power to resolve the outcome of a complaint concerning administrative procedures. Committee to have the power to refer a Complaint to the Town Council if necessary.
4	To investigate complaints about Council employees if referred by the Town Council.	Committee to have the power to resolve the outcome of a complaint about Council employees.
5	To consider and approve the Town Clerk's Performance Review.	Committee to have the power to approve the Town Clerk's annual performance review.
6	To review Contracts of Employment.	Committee to have the power to approve.
7	To review employment policies.	Committee to have the power to approve.
8	To review job specifications.	Committee to have the power to approve.
9	To review employee rates of pay.	Committee to have the power to approve.
10	To review overtime payments and holiday entitlement issues in accordance with the Town Council's Employee Management Policy.	Committee to have the power to approve.
11	To delegate areas of responsibility to either a sub-committee, a working group or an officer.	Committee to have the power to delegate.
12	To contribute to the development of the Town Council's Strategic Plan.	Committee to make proposals to full Council.

The Committee **may not** consider:

- Complaints by one Council employee against another Council employee, or between a Council employee and the Council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- Complaints against councillors. Complaints against councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council on 3rd March 2022 and, if a complaint against a councillor is received by the Council, it will be referred to Shropshire Council's Monitoring Officer.

Much Wenlock Town Council

DISCIPLINE & GRIEVANCE PANEL

For review by full Council 22nd May 2025

	TERMS OF REFERENCE
Membership	THREE Members of the Town Council
Quorum	THREE Members of the Panel
Authority	Local Government Act 1972, Sections 101 and 102
Conditions	<p>The Council's Standing Orders that refer to personnel matters will apply to all meetings of the Panel.</p> <p>The Panel shall be appointed annually. The first order of business of the first meeting of the Panel after its annual appointment will be to elect a Chairperson.</p> <p>The Panel will meet as required.</p> <p>Due to the confidential nature of the business that will be transacted all meetings will be held in private in pursuance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.</p> <p>Members of the Panel will work to a set agenda with the necessary supporting information.</p> <p>The Panel will act in accordance with the Town Council's Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.</p>
Restrictions	Due to the nature of the business to be transacted, other members of the Town Council will not be invited to attend meetings unless their presence is required.

Much Wenlock Town Council

DISCIPLINE & GRIEVANCE PANEL

	Responsibilities	Powers
1	<p>To deal with staff disciplinary and grievance matters by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering complaints referred to the Panel by an employee Add: Considering complaints referred to the Panel by full Council or the HR Committee. Advising the employee of the outcome of the complaint in writing 	<p>Delegated authority to deal with all disciplinary and grievance matters in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary & Grievance procedures.</p> <p>Delegated authority to suspend an employee (on full pay) whilst an investigation into serious misconduct is investigated.</p>
2	<p>If action is being taken against the Town Clerk, the Chairman of the Panel will inform the Town Clerk of the Panel's decision.</p>	<p>Chairman to inform the Town Clerk of the outcome on behalf of the Panel.</p>

Much Wenlock Town Council



For review 22nd May 2025

Standing Orders

Reviewed and approved 16th May 2024

NB.

- 'Chairperson' has been replaced throughout with 'Chair'
- 'He/she' has been replaced throughout with 'they'; 'his/hers' has been replaced throughout with 'their'

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1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS	4
2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS	5
3. MEETINGS GENERALLY	6
4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES	8
5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS	9
6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES	11
7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS	11
8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS	11
9. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER	11
10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE....	12
11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION	13
12. DRAFT MINUTES	13
13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS.....	14
14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS	15
15. PROPER OFFICER	15
16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER.....	17
17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS.....	17
18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT	18
19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS	19
20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION.....	20
21. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION	20
22. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA	20
23. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS	20
24. COMMUNICATING WITH SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLORS	21
25. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES.....	21
26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY	21

1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

- a. Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chair of the meeting.
- b. A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c. A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the Chair of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d. If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e. An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f. If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g. An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the Chair of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the Chair.
- h. A councillor may move an amendment to their own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i. If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chair of the meeting.
- j. Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chair of the meeting.
- k. One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chair of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l. A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m. The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- n. Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o. Unless permitted by the Chair of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since they last spoke;

- iii. to make a point of order;
- iv. to give a personal explanation; or
- v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p. During the debate on a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which they consider has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting they are concerned by.
- q. A point of order shall be decided by the Chair of the meeting and their decision shall be final.
- r. When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
 - i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s. Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the Chair of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived their right of reply.
- t. Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the Chair of the meeting.

2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

- a. No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the Chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b. If person(s) disregard the request of the Chair of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the Chair of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.

- c. If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the Chair of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. MEETINGS GENERALLY

Full Council meetings	●
Committee meetings	●
Sub-committee meetings	●

- a. **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b. **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c. The minimum three clear days' public notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting.
- d. **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e. Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- f. The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the Chair of the meeting.
- g. Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
- h. In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i. A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak.
- j. A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the Chair of the meeting.
- k. Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the Chair of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.

- l. **Subject to standing order 3(m), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To “report” means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**
- m. **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- n. **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- o. **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chair of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Deputy Chair of the Council.**
- p. **The Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Deputy Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and the Deputy Chair are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- q. **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- r. **The Chair of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise their casting vote whether or not they gave an original vote.**

See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chair of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.

- s. **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave their vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- t. The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
 - i. the time and place of the meeting;
 - ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;

- v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
- vi. if there was a public participation session; and
- vii. the resolutions made.
- u. **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's Code of Conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the Code on their right to participate and vote on that matter.**
- v. **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**

See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.

- w. **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- x. A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 hours.

4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- a. **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b. **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c. **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d. The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
 - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
 - v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the

ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer 2 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;

- vi. shall permit a standing committee to appoint its own Chair at the first meeting of the committee;
 - vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own Chair at the first meeting of the committee;
 - viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;
 - ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
 - x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
 - xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
 - xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.
- e. The Council or its committees may set up informal working groups and determine the terms of reference for such working groups.

5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- a. **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office.**
- b. **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.**
- c. **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d. **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**
- e. **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Council.**
- f. **The Chair of the Council, unless they have resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g. **The Deputy Chair of the Council, unless they resign or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chair of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h. **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a**

successor Chair of the Council has been elected. The current Chair of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

- i. **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chair of the Council has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j. Following the election of the Chair of the Council and Deputy Chair of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:
 - i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council of their acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
 - iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
 - iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
 - v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
 - vi. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
 - vii. Appointment of members to existing committees;
 - viii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;
 - ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
 - x. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
 - xi. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
 - xii. Review of the Council's complaints procedure;
 - xiii. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (*see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);
 - xiv. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
 - xv. Review of the Council's policies and strategies for investments;
 - xvi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

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

- a. **The Chair of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b. **If the Chair of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c. The Chair of a committee or a sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or the sub-committee at any time.
- d. If the Chair of a committee or a sub-committee does not call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by 2 members of the committee or the sub-committee, any 2 members of the committee or the sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or a sub-committee.

7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

- a. A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 3 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b. When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

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

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

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

- b. No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 7 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c. The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d. If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least 7 clear days before the meeting.
- e. If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chair of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f. The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g. Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

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

- a. The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
 - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
 - ii. to move to a vote;
 - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
 - iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
 - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
 - vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
 - vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
 - viii. to require a written report;
 - ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
 - x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
 - xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
 - xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
 - xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
 - xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
 - xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or

- legal requirements);
- xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii. to close the meeting.

11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

See also standing order 20.

- a. **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b. **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
- c. **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d. **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

12. DRAFT MINUTES

Full Council meetings	●
Committee meetings	●
Sub-committee meetings	●

- a. If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b. There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i).
- c. The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d. If the Chair of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

"The Chair of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the [council/committee] held on [date] in respect of [minute

number] were a correct record but their view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”

- e. **If the Council’s gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**
-
- f. Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

See also standing order 3(u).

- a. All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.
- b. Unless they has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- c. Unless they has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have another interest if so required by the Council’s Code of Conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- d. **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e. A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer and that decision is final.
- f. A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g. Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the

meeting for which the dispensation is required.

- h. **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
- i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

Deletion as per NALC model Standing Orders 2025

- ~~a. Upon notification by Shropshire Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's Code of Conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11, report this to the Council.~~
- ~~b. Where the notification in standing order 14(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chair of Council of this fact, and the Chair shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d).~~
- ~~c. The Council may:
 - ~~i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;~~
 - ~~ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;~~~~
- d. **Upon notification by Shropshire Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's Code of Conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. PROPER OFFICER

- a. The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the Town Clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b. The Proper Officer shall:

- i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
 - **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
 - **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;

- ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 5 days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it;
- iii. convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office;
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(*see also standing order 23*);
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chair or in their absence Deputy Chair of the Planning and Environment Committee within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a

planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee;

- xv. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xvi. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
(see also standing order 23).

16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

- a. The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

- a. "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b. All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c. The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the Council's income and expenditure for each quarter;
 - ii. the Council's aggregate income and expenditure for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported andwhich includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- d. As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's income and expenditure for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e. The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft Annual Governance and Accountability Return shall be presented to all councillors at

least 5 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The Annual Governance and Accountability Return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the Annual Governance Statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below £30,000 due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.

Deletion as per NALC model Standing Orders 2025

- ~~c. A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £30,000 but less than the relevant thresholds referred to in standing order 18(f) is subject to the "light touch" arrangements under Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).~~
- c. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
 - i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;

Deletion as per NALC model Standing Orders 2025

~~the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;~~

- iii. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
- iv. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
- v. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- d. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- ~~f. Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.~~
- e. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Government from time to time, the Council must consider whether the contract is subject to the requirements of the current procurement legislation and, if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.**

19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

- a. A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of the HR Committee is subject to standing order 11.
- b. Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the Chair of the Council or, if they are not available, the Deputy Chair of the Council of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the HR Committee at its next meeting.
- c. The Chair of the HR Committee or in their absence, the Deputy Chair shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Proper Officer. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by the HR Committee.
- d. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff shall contact a member of the Discipline & Grievance Panel in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Discipline & Grievance Panel.
- e. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Proper Officer relates to the Chair or Deputy Chair of the Discipline & Grievance Panel this shall be communicated to another member of the Discipline & Grievance Panel which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Discipline & Grievance Panel.
- f. Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as

confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.

- g. In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).

20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

See also standing order 21.

- a. **In accordance with Freedom of Information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**
- b. *[If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeds £200,000]*
The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.

21. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION

(Below is not an exclusive list).

See also standing order 11.

- a. The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
- b. **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data.**
- c. **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- d. **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**
- e. **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f. **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

22. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA

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

23. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS

See also standing orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvi).

- a. A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b. **Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

The above is applicable to a Council without a common seal.

24. COMMUNICATING WITH SHROPSHIRE COUNCILLORS

- a. An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of Shropshire Council representing the area of the Council.
- b. Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to Shropshire Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.

25. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES

- a. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:
 - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect;
or
 - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY

- a. All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b. A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least 3 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.
- c. The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d. The decision of the Chair of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.



MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

For review 22nd May 2025

Contents

1. General	2
2. Risk management and internal control.....	3
3. Accounts and audit.....	3
4. Budget and precept.....	5
5. Procurement.....	6
6. Banking and payments	8
7. Electronic payments.....	9
8. Cheque payments	11
9. Payment cards.....	11
10. Petty Cash	11
11. Payment of salaries and allowances	12
12. Loans and investments.....	12
13. Income	13
14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works	14
15. Stores and equipment.....	14
16. Assets, properties and estates	14
17. Insurance	14
18. [Charities].....	15
19. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations.....	15
Appendix 1 - Tender process	16

These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on [enter date].

1. General

- 1.1. These Financial Regulations govern the financial management of the council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the council. They are one of the council's governing documents and shall be observed in conjunction with the council's Standing Orders.
- 1.2. Councillors are expected to follow these regulations and not to entice employees to breach them. Failure to follow these regulations brings the office of councillor into disrepute.
- 1.3. Wilful breach of these regulations by an employee may result in disciplinary proceedings.
- 1.4. In these Financial Regulations:
 - 'Accounts and Audit Regulations' means the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43(2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified.
 - "Approve" refers to an online action, allowing an electronic transaction to take place.
 - "Authorise" refers to a decision by the council, or a committee or an officer, to allow something to happen.
 - 'Proper practices' means those set out in *The Practitioners' Guide*
 - *Practitioners' Guide* refers to the guide issued by the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance (JPAG) and published by NALC in England or Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners Guide jointly published by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks in Wales.
 - 'Must' and **bold text** refer to a statutory obligation the council cannot change.
 - 'Shall' refers to a non-statutory instruction by the council to its members and staff.
- 1.5. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) holds a statutory office, appointed by the council. The RFO;
 - acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
 - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and control systems;
 - ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
 - ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;
 - seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources; and
 - produces financial management information as required by the council.
- 1.6. **The council must not delegate any decision regarding:**
 - **setting the final budget or the precept (council tax requirement);**
 - **the outcome of a review of the effectiveness of its internal controls**
 - **approving accounting statements;**
 - **approving an annual governance statement;**
 - **borrowing;**
 - **declaring eligibility for the General Power of Competence; and**

- **addressing recommendations from the internal or external auditors**
- writing off bad debts

1.7. In addition, the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;
- authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of £10,000; and
- addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditors

2. Risk management and internal control

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

2.2. The Clerk and RFO shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements covering all activities of the council. This policy, risk management policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

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

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

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

- **ensure that risk is appropriately managed;**
- **ensure the prompt, accurate recording of financial transactions;**
- **prevent and detect inaccuracy or fraud; and**
- **allow the reconstitution of any lost records;**
- **identify the duties of officers dealing with transactions and**
- **ensure division of responsibilities.**

2.6. At least once in each quarter and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair, shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations for all accounts (including petty cash records) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the Finance and Assets Committee.

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

3. Accounts and audit

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

- 3.2. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonably accuracy at any time. In particular, they must contain:**
- **day-to-day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate;**
 - **a record of the assets and liabilities of the council;**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- 3.4. The RFO shall complete the annual Accounting Statements of the council contained in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return in accordance with proper practices, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO shall submit them (with any related documents) to the council, within the timescales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.5. **The council must ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with proper practices.**
- 3.6. **Any officer or member of the council must make available such documents and records as the internal or external auditor consider necessary for the purpose of the audit** and shall, as directed by the council, supply the RFO, internal auditor, or external auditor with such information and explanation as the council considers necessary.
- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the Finance and Assets Committee and shall carry out their work to evaluate the effectiveness of the council's risk management, control and governance processes in accordance with proper practices specified in the Practitioners' Guide.
- 3.8. The council shall ensure that the internal auditor:
- is competent and independent of the financial operations of the council;
 - reports to council in writing, or in person, on a regular basis with a minimum of one written report during each financial year;
 - can demonstrate competence, objectivity and independence, free from any actual or perceived conflicts of interest, including those arising from family relationships; and
 - has no involvement in the management or control of the council
- 3.9. Internal or external auditors may not under any circumstances:
- perform any operational duties for the council;
 - initiate or approve accounting transactions;
 - provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
 - direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.
- 3.10. For the avoidance of doubt, in relation to internal audit the terms 'independent' and 'independence' shall have the same meaning as described in The Practitioners Guide.

- 3.11. The RFO shall make arrangements for the exercise of electors' rights in relation to the accounts, including the opportunity to inspect the accounts, books, and vouchers and display or publish any notices and documents required by the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.12. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

4. Budget and precept

- 4.1. **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its council tax requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**
- 4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the HR Committee at least annually by December for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the RFO and the Chair of the Council or relevant committee. The RFO will inform committees of any salary changes impacting on their budget requirement for the coming year in good time.
- 4.3. The RFO must each year, by no later than December, prepare detailed estimates of all income and expenditure, 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 Finance & Asset Management Committee of the council.
- 4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward by placing them in an earmarked reserve with the formal approval of the Finance and Asset Committee.
- 4.5. The council shall consider annual budget proposals in relation to the council's three-year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments including Finance and Asset Management Committee recommendations for the use of reserves and sources of funding and update the forecast accordingly.
- 4.6. 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.
- 4.7. **Any member with council tax unpaid for more than two months is prohibited from voting on the budget or precept by Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must and must disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.8. The RFO shall **issue the precept to the billing authority no later than the end of February** and supply each member with a copy of the agreed annual budget.
- 4.9. The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.10. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council or relevant committee.

- 4.11. The RFO shall regularly provide the Finance & Asset Management Committee with a statement of income and expenditure 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 the end of each month and shall show explanations of material variances. For this purpose “material” shall be in excess of 15% of the budget.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer issuing an official order for the procuring goods, services or works shall ensure, as far as reasonable and practicable, that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers subject to any *de minimis* provisions.
- 5.2. The RFO/Town Clerk should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with the council’s Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, other than in an emergency.
- 5.4. **For a contract for the supply of goods, services or works where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by Parliament, the full requirements of The Procurement Act 2023 and The Procurement Regulations 2024 or any superseding legislation (“the Legislation”), must be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.**
- 5.5. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold², the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 5.12) obtain prices as follows:
- 5.6. For contracts estimated to exceed £30,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers OR advertise an open invitation for tenders in compliance with any relevant provisions of the Legislation. Tenders shall be invited in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 5.7. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation¹ regarding the publication of invitations and notices.**
- 5.8. For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT the Clerk or RFO shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes; other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph 5:12

¹ The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website if they advertise contract opportunities and also to publicise the award of contracts over £30,000 including VAT, regardless of whether they were advertised.

² Thresholds currently applicable are:

- a) For public supply and public service contracts £214,904
- b) For public works contracts £5,372,609

- 5.9. Where the value is between £500 and £3,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk or RFO shall try to obtain 3 estimates (which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers).
- 5.10. For smaller purchases, the clerk or RFO shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 5.11. **Contracts must not be split to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 5.12. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:
- i. for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - ii. for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
 - 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 RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Deputy 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.
- 5.13. When applications are made to waive this financial regulation to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason should be set out in a recommendation to the council. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 5.14. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 5.15. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:
- The Town Clerk or RFO, for any items below £500 excluding VAT.
 - The Town Clerk or RFO, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Council or Chairman of the appropriate committee, for any items above £500 and below £1,000 excluding VAT.
 - A duly delegated committee of the council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items up to £10,000 excluding VAT
 - The council for all items over £10,000;
- Such authorisation must be supported by a minute or by an authorisation slip duly signed by the Town Clerk or RFO, and where necessary also by the appropriate Chairman.
- The Town Clerk or RFO may approve the purchase of sundry items as may be needed from time to time for the efficient operation of the Town Council Office.
- 5.16. No individual member, or informal group of members may issue an official order unless instructed to do so in advance by a resolution of the council or make any contract on behalf of the council.

- 5.17. 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 or the Finance & Asset Management Committee, 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').
- 5.18. In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the Town Clerk of RFO may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which, in the Town Clerk of RFO'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 £1,000. The Town Clerk or RFO shall report such action to the Chairperson as soon as possible and to the council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 5.19. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.
- 5.20. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services over £500 excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.
- 5.21. Access to Order books shall be controlled by the RFO/Town Clerk.

6. Banking and payments

- 6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. The arrangements shall be reviewed regularly for security and efficiency.
- 6.2. The council must have safe and efficient arrangements for making payments, to safeguard against the possibility of fraud or error. Wherever possible, more than one person should be involved in any payment, for example by dual online authorisation or dual cheque signing. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.
- 6.3. All invoices for payment shall be examined for arithmetical accuracy and analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading by the RFO. They will be verified and certified by the RFO/Town Clerk, to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council.
- 6.4. Personal payments (including salaries, wages, expenses and any payment made in relation to the termination of employment) may be summarised to avoid disclosing any personal information.
- 6.5. All payments shall be made by online banking or cheque, in accordance with a resolution of the Finance and Asset Committee, unless the council resolves to use a different payment method.
- 6.6. The RFO may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the Finance and

Assets Committee may authorise in advance for the year, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Finance and Assets Committee.

- 6.7. In respect of grants the Finance and Assets Committee 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.
- 6.8. The Town Clerk and RFO shall have delegated authority to authorise payment of items only in the following circumstances:
- i. any payments of up to £500 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
 - ii. payments of up to £1,000 excluding VAT in cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises.
 - iii. any payment necessary to avoid a charge under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 or to comply with contractual terms, where the due date for payment is before the next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Assets Committee, where the Clerk or 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 the Finance and Assets Committee.
 - iv. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £20,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee.
 - v. An expenditure item authorised under 6.6 above (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of the Finance & Asset Management Committee.
- 6.9. The RFO shall present a retrospective schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting to the Finance and Assets Committee. The committee shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself, shall retrospectively authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last item by the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.
- 6.10. 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.
- 6.11. 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.
- 6.12. Any changes in the recorded details of suppliers, such as bank account records, shall be approved in writing by a Member.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO or Town Clerk shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify several councillors who will be authorised to approve transactions on those accounts and a minimum of two people will be involved in any online approval process.
- 7.2. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.
- 7.3. No employee or councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the council or its banking, to anyone not authorised in writing by the council or a duly delegated committee.
- 7.4. The Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be sent by email to two authorised signatories.
- 7.5. In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator, an authorised signatory shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.
- 7.6. Two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.
- 7.7. Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online, for audit purposes.
- 7.8. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next Finance and Assets committee meeting, and a signed copy appended to the minutes.
- 7.9. Regular payments (such as utilities and National Non-Domestic Rates) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed by two authorised members and the payments are reported to the Finance and Assets committee. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 7.10. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council provided that each payment is approved online by two authorised bank signatories, evidence is retained and any payments are reported to the Finance and Assets committee at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 7.11. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed by two authorised members, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to the Finance and Assets committee when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.
- 7.12. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by the RFO. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.
- 7.13. Members and officers shall ensure that any computer used for the council's financial business has adequate security, with anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software installed and regularly updated.

- 7.14. 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.
- 7.15. 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.
- 7.16. 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 these shall be kept securely by the Town Clerk in a locked drawer, which can be accessed only by the Town Clerk or RFO. Passwords must be changed if there is a change in administrative personnel. This will not be required for a member's personal computer used only for remote authorisation of bank payments.

8. Cheque payments

- 8.1. Cheques or orders for payment in accordance in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two authorised members.
- 8.2. A signatory having a family or business relationship with the beneficiary of a payment shall not, under normal circumstances, be a signatory to that payment. If a member who is also a bank signatory has declared a disclosable pecuniary interest, or has any other interest, in the matter in respect of which the payment is being made, that Councillor shall be required to consider Standing Orders, and thereby determine whether it is appropriate and/or permissible to be a signatory to the transaction in question.
- 8.3. To indicate agreement of the details on the cheque with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall also initial the cheque counterfoil and/or payment list and the relevant invoice.
- 8.4. Cheques or orders for payment drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule as presented to the Finance & Asset Management Committee shall be signed by two members of council in accordance with a resolution instructing that payment.

9. Payment cards

- 9.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and the RFO and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1000 unless authorised by the Finance and Asset Committee before any order is placed.
- 9.2. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used under any circumstances.
- 9.3. Any corporate trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Town Clerk and RFO and shall be subject to automatic payment in full at each month-end.

10. Petty Cash

- 10.1. The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of £50 and may provide petty cash for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses.
 - a) Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept, along with receipts to substantiate every payment.

- b) Cash income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere in these regulations.
- c) Payments to maintain the petty cash float shall be shown separately on the schedule of payments presented to the council under 6.9

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

- 11.1. As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE and National Insurance legislation.**
- 11.2. Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**
- 11.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated committee. No changes shall be made to any employee's gross pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment without the prior consent of the committee responsible for personnel.
- 11.4. Payment of salaries shall be made, after deduction of tax, national insurance, pension contributions and any similar statutory or discretionary deductions, on the dates stipulated in employment contracts.
- 11.5. Deductions from salary shall be paid to the relevant bodies within the required timescales, provided that each payment is reported, as set out in these regulations above.
- 11.6. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be recorded in a payroll control account or other separate confidential record, with the total of such payments each calendar month reported in the cashbook. The total of such payments shall be reported (along with all other payments as made) to the Finance and Assets Committee at the next available meeting to ensure that only payments due for the period have actually been paid.
- 11.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, supported by a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.
- 11.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.
- 11.9. Each and every payment to employees of net salary and to the appropriate creditor of the statutory and discretionary deductions shall be kept confidential and are 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.

12. Loans and investments

- 12.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council and must be approved as to terms and purpose by Council.

- 12.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the full council. In each case a written report shall be provided to council on the value for money of the proposed transaction.
- 12.3. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.
- 12.4. All loans and investments of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council and shall be for a set period.
- 12.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO or Town Clerk.
- 12.6. Payments in respect of short term or long-term investments, including transfers between bank accounts held in the same bank, shall be made in accordance with these financial regulations.

13. Income

- 13.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO, with the exception of rent due from market stalls, which may be collected and managed by the Administrative Assistant.
- 13.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report from the RFO. Notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.
- 13.3. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.
- 13.4. All sums received on behalf of the council shall be deposited intact with the council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary. The origin of each receipt shall clearly be recorded on the paying-in slip or other record.
- 13.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 13.6. The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted by the due date. Any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made at least annually at the end of the financial year.
- 13.7. Where 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 record such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken for the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 13.8. Any income that is the property of a charitable trust shall be paid into a charitable bank account. 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 18 below)

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

- 14.1. Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments, which shall be made within the time specified in the contract based on signed certificates from the architect or other consultant engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 14.2. Any variation of, addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the council and by the Town Clerk or RFO to the contractor in writing. A report shall be submitted to the council where the final cost (excluding agreed variations) is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

15. Stores and equipment – Not applicable

16. Assets, properties and estates

- 16.1. The Town Clerk and RFO shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.
- 16.2. The RFO shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date, with a record of all properties held by the council, their location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held, in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 16.3. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.
- 16.4. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the full council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item of tangible moveable property does not exceed £500. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.
- 16.5. No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a written report shall be provided to council in respect of valuation and 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 where required by law or felt to be appropriate.

17. Insurance

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

- 17.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 17.3. The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the Finance and Assets Management Committee at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.
- 17.4. 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 Finance and Asset Committee.

18. Charities

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

19. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

- 19.1. It shall be the duty of the council to review the Financial Regulations of the council from time to time and following any change of clerk or RFO. The Town Clerk and RFO shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.
- 19.2. 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 presented to all members of council. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.
- 19.3. The council may temporarily amend these Financial Regulations by a duly notified resolution, to cope with periods of absence, local government reorganisation, national restrictions or other exceptional circumstances.

Appendix 1 - Tender process

- 1) Any invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases.
- 2) The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post, unless an electronic tendering process has been agreed by the council.
- 3) Where a postal process is used, 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. All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.
- 4) Where an electronic tendering process is used, the council shall use a specific email address that will be monitored to ensure that nobody accesses any tender before the expiry of the deadline for submission.
- 5) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall be subject to Standing Order 18(d) and shall refer to the terms of the Bribery Act 2010.
- 6) Where the council, or duly delegated committee, does not accept any tender, quote or estimate, the work is not allocated and the council requires further pricing, no person shall be permitted to submit a later tender, estimate or quote who was present when the original decision-making process was being undertaken.



MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

The following procedure should be followed by anyone wishing to make a complaint about Much Wenlock Town Council.

If you have a complaint about a Town Councillor under the Code of Conduct, you should contact the Monitoring Officer at Shropshire Council, who is the responsible person for dealing with complaints about the behaviour of Councillors:

The Monitoring Officer
Legal and Democratic Services
Shropshire Council
Guildhall
Frankwell Quay
Shrewsbury
SY3 8HQ

Or via the Shropshire Council website: www.shropshire.gov.uk

If you have a complaint about the Town Clerk, you should contact the Town Mayor:

The Town Mayor
Much Wenlock Town Council
The Corn Exchange
High Street
Much Wenlock
TF13 6AE

If you have any other complaint, you should contact the Town Clerk:

The Town Clerk
Much Wenlock Town Council
The Corn Exchange
High Street
Much Wenlock
TF13 6AE

Email: townclerk@muchwenlock-tc.gov.uk

Tel: 01952 727509

In order for your complaint to be dealt with, the following procedure has been adopted so you can be assured your complaint will be properly and fully considered. It is hoped that by following this transparent process, your concerns will be resolved as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The formal complaints procedure will be followed where complaints cannot be resolved informally by the Town Clerk or the Mayor.

1. Much Wenlock Town Council is committed to providing a quality service for the benefit of the people who live or work in its area or are visitors to the locality. If you are dissatisfied with the standard of service you have received from this Council or are unhappy about an action or lack of action by this Council, this Complaints Procedure sets out how you may complain to the Council and how we shall try to resolve your complaint.
2. This Complaints Procedure applies to complaints about Council administration and procedures and may include complaints about how Council employees have dealt with your concerns.
3. This Complaints Procedure does not apply to:
 - 3.1. Complaints by one Council employee against another Council employee, or between a Council employee and the Council as employer. These matters are dealt with under the Council's disciplinary and grievance procedures.
 - 3.2. Complaints against Councillors. Complaints against Councillors are covered by the Code of Conduct for Members adopted by the Council on 3rd March 2022, as amended on 5th January 2023, and if a complaint against a Councillor is received by the Council, it will be referred to the Monitoring Officer of Shropshire Council. Further information on the process of dealing with complaints against Councillors can be found on the Shropshire Council website: www.shropshire.gov.uk
 - 3.3. Complaints that have already been dealt with by our Complaints Procedure.
 - 3.4. Complaints that are more than 12 months old and it would not be possible for the Council to consider the complaint effectively and fairly, e.g. due to changes in staffing and record retention timescales.
 - 3.5. Alleged criminal activity. This should be reported to the police.
4. You should make your complaint about the Council's procedures or administration to the Town Clerk. You may do this in person, by phone, or by writing to or emailing the Town Clerk. Contact details are given above. All formal complaints must be communicated in writing. Complaints will be treated as confidential.
5. Wherever possible, the Town Clerk will try to resolve your complaint informally and as soon as practicable. If the Town Clerk cannot resolve the complaint to your satisfaction, or as an alternative to an informal complaint, you may make a formal complaint in writing.
6. If you do not wish to report your complaint to the Town Clerk, you may make your complaint directly to the Mayor, who will try to resolve your complaint or report your complaint to the appropriate Committee of the Council.
7. Complaints about issues or events that occurred more than 12 months prior to the date of the complaint will not normally be considered unless any of the following circumstances apply:
 - The complainant was not aware, until beyond the 12 month period, of the actions of the Council which now form the subject of the complaint;
 - The complainant was incapacitated by ill-health beyond the 12 month period which prevented him/her from making a complaint within the allowed timescale and the complainant provides proof of this.

There will be no review of a complaint that was dealt with more than 12 months ago.

Formal Complaint – Stage 1

8. Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Town Clerk or Mayor will normally acknowledge your complaint within five working days and advise who will be dealing with your complaint.
9. Each formal complaint will be investigated, with further information being obtained as necessary from you and/or from staff or members of the Council. Please provide as much information as possible about the cause of your complaint, including relevant events, dates, etc., as well as your contact details. You may be invited to make verbal representations to the person or committee investigating your complaint.
10. The Town Clerk or the Mayor will notify you within 12 weeks of the outcome of your complaint and of what action (if any) the Council proposes to take in relation to your complaint. If, for any reason, this timescale cannot be met, the Town Clerk or Mayor will advise you of this before expiry of the 12 weeks.

Formal Complaint Appeal – Stage 2

11. If you are dissatisfied with the response to your complaint, you may ask for your complaint to be referred to the full Council for review. You will be asked to provide details of why you feel that your complaint has not been fully dealt with.
12. The purpose of a Stage 2 review is to consider if:
 - The complaint was fully understood and addressed
 - The relevant evidence was taken into account
 - The Council's policies and procedures were properly followed
 - The complaints process was carried out properly and fairly
 - The conclusions were reasonable and fair and reached on the basis of evidence
 - Any other actions or remedies are appropriate.

It is not to:

- Reinvestigate the complaint – it will focus on understanding continuing concerns and consider whether the Stage 1 resolution was undertaken fairly and that the conclusions reached were reasonable
 - Revisit a decision taken by committee or an officer
 - Review Council policy
 - Deal with any new matters that were not part of the original complaint
 - Cover any points dealt with by a court or where an appeal against a decision lies with a court or other legal process.
13. You will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review of your original complaint within eight weeks. This concludes the complaint process.
 14. If a complainant persists in communicating with the Council once their case has been closed, the Council reserves the right to terminate all further communication. The case will only be re-visited if the complainant can provide fresh evidence that may affect the Council's previous decision concerning the original complaint. If the Council feels that re-opening the complaint cannot be justified, the complainant will be notified in writing that the case has been closed and there will be no further communication.

Timescales for Stages 1 and 2

15. A formal complaint will normally be acknowledged within five working days.
16. Formal complaints will be investigated and a response provided within 12 weeks of receipt. If, for any reason, this timescale cannot be met, the Town Clerk or Mayor will advise you of this before expiry of the 12 weeks.
17. If you choose to progress from Stage 1 to Stage 2 of the procedure, you will have 20 working days from the date of the Council's Stage 1 response to make a request for your complaint to progress to the final stage of the complaints procedure.
18. You will be notified in writing of the outcome of the Stage 2 review within eight weeks. This concludes the complaint process.
19. Complaints will be kept on file for no more than five years.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH UNREASONABLY PERSISTENT & VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANTS

In order to deal with complaints which may be made about Council administration, operations and services efficiently and effectively the Town Council has a Complaints Procedure.

However, sometimes complainants may make persistent or frequent contact with the Town Clerk's office to the extent that such contact hinders the normal day to day running of the Town Council operations. In this event, with approval from the Council, the Town Clerk will implement the procedure for dealing with frequent or vexatious complainants, since such complaints can be time consuming, lead to unnecessary additional cost to the council tax payer and affect delivery of services.

DEFINITIONS

The term "vexatious" may be used to describe someone who raises a complaint/s in order to cause annoyance or disruption and unnecessarily aggravate Council staff members, rather than seeking to resolve a grievance. This may involve making serial complaints about different matters or continuing to raise the same or similar matters repeatedly. Their method and frequency of contact with the Council can hinder the efficient consideration of their complaints and the ability of officers to provide a satisfactory outcome. Some individuals may also display threatening and abusive behaviour or harassment when contacting the Council.

An "unreasonably persistent" complainant is usually someone who makes frequent contact, often on the same, or very similar, matters. This could be regardless of whether their complaint or concerns have been dealt with.

ACTIONS AND BEHAVIOURS OF UNREASONABLY PERSISTENT OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANTS

The following are examples of behaviours that are considered vexatious or unreasonably persistent:

- Refusing to accept that certain issues are not within the scope or power of the Council to investigate, change or influence
- Making numerous, repetitious and unreasonable contact because an individual is unable or unwilling to accept or agree with a policy decision or approach which has been adopted by the Council
- Insisting on a complaint being dealt with in ways which are incompatible with the complaints procedure
- Complaining about or challenging an issue based on a historic and/or irreversible decision or incident
- Making an unreasonable number of contacts with the Council, by any means, in relation to a specific complaint or complaints
- Persistently approaching the Council through different routes about the same issue
- Raising numerous, detailed but unimportant questions and insisting they are all answered
- Making the same complaint repeatedly, perhaps with minor differences, after the complaints procedure has been concluded and insisting that the minor differences makes these into 'new' complaints which should be put through the complaints procedure
- Refusing to accept the decision or outcome, repeatedly arguing points with no new evidence, complaining about the outcome and/or denying that an adequate response has been given
- Making excessive demands on the time and resources of staff with lengthy phone calls, e-mails or detailed letters every few days, and expecting immediate responses
- Adopting a violent, aggressive or threatening demeanour towards staff
- Sending in repeated emails which contain foul language and are derogatory towards staff with intent to cause harm or fear.

PROCEDURE

This procedure will be implemented if the behaviour of a complainant is deemed to be unreasonably persistent or vexatious in their contact with the Council or its officers.

The Town Clerk will report the matter to the Council, outlining the grounds for implementing the procedure in relation to a complainant. The Council will consider the information provided and will decide whether a complainant is to be deemed vexatious or unreasonably persistent and whether the procedure should be implemented.

Once the decision has been made, the complainant will be notified that the Council's procedure for dealing with unreasonably persistent and vexatious complainants is to be implemented, together with the reason why, and for how long the measures will be operative. The following are examples of the types of restriction on contact which the Council may specify:

- to contact the Town Council in a particular form, for example, letters or emails only
- to contact only a specific, named officer
- to restrict telephone calls to specified days and times
- that any personal contact takes place in the presence of a witness
- to enter into an agreement about future contact with the Town Council
- to inform the complainant that the Council will not reply to or acknowledge any further contact from them on the specific topic of that complaint.

If the complainant feels that the decision for restricted contact to the Council is unfair or incorrect, they may contact the Town Clerk in writing, who will refer the matter to the Council for a single and final decision.

New complaints received from complainants previously deemed to be unreasonably persistent and/or vexatious will be treated on their merits.

For review 22nd May 2025

Much Wenlock Town Council PUBLICATION SCHEME

Information published	How the information can be obtained	Cost
Class 1 - Who we are and what we do <p>Much Wenlock Town Council was founded in 1974 following the Local Government Act 1972. Its function is to serve local residents who live in the parish of Much Wenlock. The population is circa 2,906 (2021 census) and there are 2,414 electors and 1,459 properties in the electoral division (May 2024).</p> <p>The Town Council has eleven councillors who work as a corporate body and make decisions for the benefit of the local community. The Council's Town Clerk provides independent, objective and professional advice, information and administrative support to councillors. Under the direction of the Town Clerk, the Council's decisions are implemented by the Council's staff who work as a team to serve the local community.</p>	Website: www.muchwenlock-tc.gov.uk	Free
Who's who on the Council and its Committees	Website and notice board	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Contact details for Town Clerk and Council members	Website, notice board and link from Facebook	Free
	Hard copy	10p side A4
Location of main Council office and accessibility details	Website and notice board	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Staffing structure	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it		
Annual return form and report by auditor	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Current budget/precept	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Expenditure over £500	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Financial Standing Orders and Regulations	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Grants given and received – recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which they are approved	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
List of current contracts awarded and value of contract	Contact Town Clerk	
Members' allowances and expenses	Contact Town Clerk	

Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing (Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews)		
Neighbourhood Plan	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Annual Report Town Meeting (current and previous year as a minimum)	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Quality status	The Council does not have Quality Status	
Class 4 – How we make decisions (Decision making processes and records of decisions) Current and previous council year as a minimum		
Timetable of meetings (Council, committee meetings and Annual Town Meeting)	Website, notice board	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Agendas of meetings	Website, notice board	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Minutes of meetings – this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Reports presented to council meetings - this will exclude information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting.	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Responses to consultation papers	Email	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Responses to planning applications	Shropshire Council’s website	Free
Bye-laws	Not currently applicable	
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures (Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities) Current information only		
Policies and procedures for the conduct of council business: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Procedural standing orders● Committee, sub-committee and working group terms of reference● Delegated authority in respect of officers● Code of Conduct● Policy statements	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Policies and procedures for the provision of services and about the employment of staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Internal policies relating to the delivery of services● Equality and diversity policy● Health and safety policy● Recruitment policies (including current vacancies)● Policies and procedures for handling requests for information● Complaints procedures (including those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme)	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Information security policy	Under review	
Records management policies (records retention, destruction and archive)	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Data protection policies	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4

Class 6 – Lists and Registers		
Currently maintained lists and registers available by inspection only		
Asset Register	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Disclosure log (indicating the information that has been provided in response to requests; recommended as good practice, but may not be held by the Town Council)	Contact Town Clerk	
Register of members' interests	Website	Free
Register of gifts and hospitality	Contact Town Clerk	
Class 7 – The services we offer		
(Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced for the public and businesses)		
Current information only		
Burial grounds	Website	Free
	Hard copy	10p per side A4
Gaskell Recreation Ground	Website	Free
Seating, litter bins, clocks, memorials and lighting	Website	Free
Bus shelters	Website	Free
Markets	Website	Free
Public conveniences	Website	Free
Street lights and Christmas lights	Contact Town Clerk	
A summary of services for which the council is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees (e.g. burial fees)	Website	Free
Additional Information		
Please contact the Town Clerk for information that is not included above		

Contact details:

Town Clerk
 Much Wenlock Town Council
 Corn Exchange
 High Street
 Much Wenlock
 Shropshire
 TF13 6AE
Tel: 01952 727509
Email: townclerk@muchwenlock-tc.gov.uk
Website: www.muchwenlock-tc.gov.uk

SCHEDULE OF CHARGES

This describes how the charges have been calculated.

TYPE OF CHARGE	DESCRIPTION	BASIS OF CHARGE
Disbursement cost	Photocopying @ 10p per sheet (black & white)	Based on actual cost
	Photocopying @ 20p per sheet (colour)	Based on actual cost
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard 2 nd class
Statutory Fee		In accordance with the relevant legislation

Information sent by email will be free of charge.

The above disbursement charges may be made in connection with Freedom of Information Requests. Charges relating to Subject Access Requests will be in accordance with guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office.

For review 22nd May 2025

Much Wenlock Town Council

COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Much Wenlock Town Council ("the Council") is accountable to members of the public and is committed to the provision of accurate information about its governance, decisions and activities. To this end, all communication will be conveyed in an open and straightforward manner, using various media.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND RESTRICTIONS

This policy is subject to the Council's obligations which are set out in the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Act 1986, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, other legislation which may apply, and the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. The Council's Financial Regulations and relevant Standing Orders referenced in this policy are available on the Council's website or via the Council's Publication Scheme.

The Council cannot disclose confidential information or information the disclosure of which is prohibited by law. The Council cannot disclose information if this is prohibited under the terms of a court order, by legislation, the Council's Standing Orders, under contract or by common law. Councillors are subject to additional restrictions about the disclosure of confidential information which arise from the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council, a copy of which is available via the Council's Publication Scheme and available to download from the Council's website.

GENERAL COMMUNICATION

The Town Clerk is the Proper Officer of the Town Council and is responsible for formal communication between the Council, the press and other media, and members of the public. However, this does not prevent individual Councillors from communicating with the press and public, but they must ensure that there is clarity in their communication so there is a clear distinction between **individual opinions** and those approved by the Town Council. The Town Clerk may contact the media if the Council wants to provide information, a statement or other material about the Council.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Through a positive and transparent approach Councillors and staff will actively engage with the community and the local media to promote the Council's decisions and plans. The Town Clerk will work with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and appropriate chairs of committees and sub-committees to agree the content of pertinent information where necessary.

Councillors who wish to communicate directly with the press and public, either orally, or via their own personal email or social media accounts, should make it clear whether they are speaking as a Councillor or as a private individual. If Councillors wish to express their own views directly with the media, they should not seek to undermine the Town Council if their views are different to the Council's corporate position. If Councillors wish to take this course, it might be prudent to seek a briefing with the Town Clerk beforehand. No communication should be made that is in any way damaging to the interests or reputation of the Town Council or which reveals confidential matters, or information likely to endanger the health or safety of a Councillor, employee, or any other individual.

The Town Council's Standing Order no: 22(a) states that requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its Councillors or staff, shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media (this policy). The Council will co-operate with the media and others seeking information on the Council's activities or ambitions.

The Town Clerk is responsible for the preparation of notices of Council meetings, agendas and minutes and for overseeing the development and maintenance of the Council's website so that it remains current.

All correspondence addressed to the Town Council will be actioned by the Town Clerk or other officer. Information that needs to be considered by the Town Council, or one of its committees, will be placed on the first relevant agenda after its receipt. Other relevant information will be emailed to Members in between meetings for information only.

METHOD OF COMMUNICATION

The Council may use any of the following methods to communicate with members of the public and the press. Communication may be undertaken by other members of staff under the supervision of the Town Clerk. The message must be consistent across all channels of communication used.

ACTIVITY	METHOD OF COMMUNICATION	RESPONSIBILITY
Newsletter	Wenlock Herald (monthly)	Town Clerk
	Website	Town Clerk
Approved and draft minutes	Website	Town Clerk
Agendas	Website/notice board/social media	Town Clerk
Supporting information for meetings (non-confidential)	Website	Town Clerk
Council policies/procedures	Website	Town Clerk
Annual Town Meeting	The Mayor and relevant Committee Chairs will be responsible for presenting an overview of Council activities at the Annual Town Meeting	Town Clerk/Mayor/Committee Chairs
Press releases	Website/notice board/social media/local press	Town Clerk
Annual external audit	Website/notice board	RFO (following adoption by the Town Council)
Adopted Annual Accounts	Website/notice board/social media	RFO
Councillor vacancies	Website/notice board/social media	Town Clerk
Financial statements and other financial information	Website	RFO

Other information will be provided in accordance with the Council's adopted Publication Scheme.

WEBSITE / NOTICE BOARD

The Council's website will be the main information hub and channel for communicating details about the Town Council. The website will also act as a channel for other information such as local news and events, consultation details, road closures and anything that is of general interest to the local community including links to other websites. The website will be regularly updated.

Agendas of meetings and other relevant notices will be displayed on the Council noticeboard under the Corn Exchange.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media channels will be used to supplement the information provided on the Council's website, to share news and to promote activities and events. These media will help to build social capital so that there is a two-way channel between the Town Council and members of the public.

Social media accounts can currently only be created using a personal account. This requires extra care and awareness of who has been given responsibilities and access to the log in details; a memorandum etc should be agreed that sets out procedures for relinquishing participation in that account.

An official account on any social media website may only be set up with consent from the Council. Only authorised staff may use these accounts to post online and access to the account is strictly limited. The Council's social media accounts are managed and monitored by staff under the supervision of the Town Clerk. All information published on the internet must comply with the Council's confidentiality policy and data protection legislation.

The Council's social media accounts are monitored during working hours and, if appropriate, staff will endeavour to respond as quickly as possible to questions received via social networking sites. However, an immediate response to posts from members of the public cannot always be provided. All formal requests, comments, enquiries or complaints should be emailed directly to the council office or submitted using the contact form on the website.

Social Media Moderation Policy

Whilst the Council supports open discussion, inappropriate comments from members of the public will not be tolerated and will be removed and the reason given. The Council Facebook page is reactively moderated. The Council cannot accept responsibility for the content of any comment.

The Council reserves the right to remove comments on Facebook that:

- Contain abusive, obscene, indecent or offensive language, or link to obscene or offensive material
- Contain swear words or other sorts of profanity
- Are completely removed from the topic of conversation or are not relevant to the item posted
- Contain abusive language towards an individual involved in the thread, other organisations or the page administrator
- Constitute spam or promote or advertise products, except where it is for an event, publication or similar item that has direct relevance to the subject of discussion
- Are designed to cause nuisance to the page administrator or other users.

For serious and/or persistent breaches of the moderation policy, the Council reserves the right to prevent users from posting further comments.

If a genuine complaint is posted, the complainant will be directed to the Council's Complaints Procedure, which can be viewed on the Council's website or is available from the Town Clerk. Comments and enquiries will only be responded to during normal office hours. **Personal information should not be conveyed through social media.**

Use of Photos and Video

Only the Clerk or other staff have permission to upload photos and videos. The appropriate permissions must be obtained for all imagery.

Personal Accounts on Social Media

Staff need to use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the terms of their contract of employment. The absence of, or lack of, explicit reference to a specific website or service does not limit the extent of the application of this policy. Where no policy or guidelines exist, employees should use their professional judgement and take the most prudent action possible. If the Council is referred to in a way that is deemed defamatory or confidential information is disclosed, it reserves the right to report the comment and request that it be removed.

Councillors are at liberty to set up accounts using any of the tools available but should ensure they are clearly identified as personal and do not in any way imply that they reflect the Council's view. Councillors should at all times present a professional image and not disclose anything of a confidential nature. Comments of a derogatory, proprietary or libelous nature should not be made and care should be taken to avoid guesswork, exaggeration and colourful language.

COMMUNICATION BY EMAIL, INTERNET, TELEPHONE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Communications via email, and internet usage undertaken in the name of the Council or on Council systems, carry inherent risks such as:

- potential defamation
- spreading of viruses, including Trojans which can steal data
- breach of confidentiality
- accepting files from sources in online chat rooms which could bypass firewalls or email filters
- breach of contract
- breach of copyright
- breach of data protection legislation
- breach of privacy and unlawful discrimination
- the reputation of the Council.

COMMUNICATION BY EMAIL

When conducting Council business, employees and Town Councillors should use their official Council email accounts. Council email accounts should not be used for private business. All employees and Town Councillors must follow the procedure outlined below when sending and receiving emails on behalf of the Town Council.

- all messages must use appropriate business language
- a waiver clause will be included and employees must include a waiver clause at the end of each email message

- the circulating of offensive, indecent, or obscene material, or anything which breaches the Equal Opportunities Policy is strictly prohibited
- confidential material should not be disclosed
- only attachments from a trusted source may be downloaded on Council IT equipment
- ensure that the address of the recipient is correct before sending emails
- ensure that a 'reply to all' is appropriate
- ensure that personal email addresses are not passed on without permission
- in bulk emails, ensure that the recipient email addresses are hidden
- ensure that essential files are saved before deleting the message in which they were received.

COMMUNICATION BY TELEPHONE

All employees must follow the procedure outlined below when using the Council's telephone:

- answer all calls by stating the name of the Town Council
- be polite at all times
- do not be rude or abrupt to callers
- do not use offensive language
- check the telephone message service frequently for messages from callers and respond in a timely manner.

MEETINGS

1. Agendas for Council meetings will be accompanied by sufficient supporting information to enable Councillors to make informed decisions and for a reasonable member of the public to understand. Confidential information will be excluded. Agendas and supporting papers will be issued by email if the Councillor has given agreement, and as hard copies on request, in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.
2. Supporting information will also be published on the Council's website at the same time as the agenda to which it relates. Draft minutes for all Council meetings will be published on the Council's website as soon as they have been prepared, with the proviso that they cannot be considered accurate until approved.
3. Meetings of the Council and its committees are open to the public unless the meeting resolves to exclude them because their presence at the meeting is prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business or other special reason(s) stated in the resolution. In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, persons may be required to leave a meeting of the council and its committees if their disorderly behaviour obstructs the business of the meeting.
4. Where a meeting of the Council and its committees includes an opportunity for public participation, members of the public and representatives of the media may speak and ask questions. Public participation is regulated by the Council's Standing Orders.
5. The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a meeting of the Council and its committees (which includes e.g. using a mobile phone or tablet, recording for a TV radio broadcast, providing commentary on blogs, web forums, or social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and YouTube) which enables a person not at the meeting to see, hear or be given commentary about the meeting is permitted, unless (i) the meeting has resolved to hold all or part of the meeting without the public present or (ii) such activities disrupt the proceedings or (iii) paragraph 9 below applies.
6. The photographing, recording, filming or other reporting of a child or vulnerable adult at a Council or committee meeting is not permitted unless an adult responsible for them has given permission.
7. Oral reporting or commentary about a Council or committee meeting by a person who is present at the meeting is not permitted if this interferes with the conduct or business of the meeting.
8. The Council shall, as far as it is practicable, provide reasonable facilities for anyone taking a report of a Council or committee meeting.
9. The Council's Standing Orders will confirm if attendance by the public, their participation, photographing, recording, filming or other reporting is permitted at a meeting of a sub-committee.

Confidentiality and Meetings

There are few cases where there is good reason to exclude the public and press from Council meetings or to impose secrecy upon Members. However, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and the Local Government Act 1972, ss100 and 102 the following are examples of business which should not be discussed when members of the public are present:

- a) Engagement, terms of service, conduct and dismissal of employees (all staffing matters)
- b) Terms of tenders, and proposals and counter-proposals in negotiations for contracts
- c) Preparation of cases in legal proceedings
- d) The early stages of any dispute.

REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

Council information will be made available to members of the public in accordance with the Council's adopted 'Publication Scheme'.

In compliance with Standing Order no. 20, requests for information held by the Council shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be addressed by the Proper Officer and referred to the Council when appropriate. The Council shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

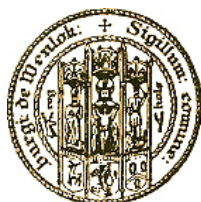
In accordance with Standing Order no. 11, neither the Town Clerk, nor Councillors, will disclose confidential information that is exempt under the Freedom of Information Act. The agenda and its supporting papers, and the minutes from a meeting where confidential or sensitive information is discussed, shall not disclose or otherwise undermine such information which, for special reasons, is not in the public interest.

The Council will seek to improve its communications work through renewal and enhanced use of its website, social media and digital approaches to sharing information, alongside making hard copies available.

PURDAH

In the six-week run up to an election – local or general – councils have to be very careful not to do or say anything that could be viewed in any way to support any political party or candidate. This period is known as purdah. The Council will continue to publish important service announcements but will monitor and, if necessary, remove responses on social media if they are overtly party political.

For review 22nd May 2025



Much Wenlock Town Council

PRIVACY NOTICE

When you contact us

The information you provide (personal information such as name, address, email address, phone number, organisation) will be processed and stored to enable us to contact you and respond to your correspondence, provide information and/or access to our facilities and services. Your personal information will not be shared or provided to any third party.

The Council's Right to Process Information

General Data Protection Regulations Article 6 (1) (a) (b) and (e)

Processing is with consent of the data subject, or

Processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation, or

Processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller.

Information Security

Much Wenlock Town Council has a duty to ensure the security of personal data. We make sure that your information is protected from unauthorised access, loss, manipulation, falsification, destruction or unauthorised disclosure. This is done through appropriate technical measures, policies and management. Copies of these policies can be requested.

We will only keep your data for the purpose it was collected for and only for as long as is necessary, in compliance with our document retention policy and schedule, after which it will be deleted.

Children

We will not process any data relating to a child (under 13) without the express parental/guardian consent of the child concerned.

Access to Information

You have the right to request access to the information we hold on you. You can do this by contacting the Town Clerk at the Town Council office.

Information Correction

If you believe that the information we hold about you is incorrect, you may contact us so that we can update it and keep your data accurate. Please contact the Town Clerk at the Town Council office to request this.

Information Deletion

If you wish Much Wenlock Town Council to delete the information we hold about you please contact the Town Clerk at the Town Council office to request this.

Right to Object

If you believe that your data is not being processed for the purpose it has been collected for, you may object: please contact the Town Clerk to object.

Rights Related to Automated Decision Making and Profiling

Much Wenlock Town Council does not use any form of automated decision making or the profiling of individual personal data.

Conclusion

In accordance with the law, we only collect a limited amount of information about you that is necessary for correspondence, information and service provision. We do not use profiling, we do not sell or pass on your data to third parties. We do not use your data for purposes other than those specified. We make sure your data is stored securely. We delete all information deemed to be no longer necessary. We regularly review our Privacy Policy to keep it up to date in protecting your data.

Complaints

If you have a complaint regarding the way your personal data has been processed, you may make a complaint to Much Wenlock Town Council and the Information Commissioner's Office (contact details below).

Contact Details

Please contact us at the following address if you have any questions about this Privacy Notice or the personal data we hold about you or to exercise all relevant rights, queries or complaints:

Town Clerk / Data Controller
Much Wenlock Town Council
The Corn Exchange
High Street
Much Wenlock
TF13 6AE

Tele: 01952 727509

Email: townclerk@muchwenlock-tc.gov.uk

You can contact the Information Commissioner's Office on 0303 123 1113 or via email at:

<https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/> or at the Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF

MUCH WENLOCK TOWN COUNCIL

INVESTMENT STRATEGY

2023-2026

For review 22nd May 2025

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Much Wenlock Town Council acknowledges the importance of prudently investing funds held on behalf of the community. All investments will adhere to the Council's financial procedures and advice received from the Council's internal and external auditors.
- 1.2 This strategy has been prepared in accordance with the Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance"), issued under section 15(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2003, and guidance within Governance and Accountability for Local Councils, A Practitioners Guide.
- 1.3 The Guidance states:
- a) Where a town or parish council expects its investments at any time during a financial year to exceed £100,000, ("the Guidance") should apply in relation to that year.
 - b) Where a town or parish council expects its investments at any time during a financial year to exceed £10,000 but not £100,000, it should decide on the extent, if any, to which it would be reasonable to have regard to ("the Guidance") in relation to that year.
 - c) Where a town or parish council expects its investments at any time during a financial year not to exceed £10,000, no part of ("the Guidance") need be treated as applying in relation to that year.
- 1.4 Much Wenlock Town Council expects its investments during the 2023-26 financial years to exceed £100,000 and therefore has agreed to apply ("the Guidance") as set out below.

2.0 Definitions

- 2.1 The following definitions of terms apply:
- 2.1.1. **Investment** covers all of the financial assets of a local authority as well as other non-financial assets that the organisation holds primarily or partially to generate a profit: for example, investment property portfolios. This may therefore include investments that are not managed as part of normal funding management processes or under funding management delegations.
 - 2.1.2 A **credit rating agency** is one of the following three companies:
 - Standard and Poor's
 - Moody's Investors Service Ltd; and
 - Fitch Ratings Ltd
 - 2.1.3 A **loan** is a written or oral agreement where a local authority temporarily transfers cash to a third party, joint venture, subsidiary, or associate who promises to return it according to, normally with interest. This definition does not include a loan to another local authority, which is classified as a specified investment.

3.0 Investment Objectives

3.1 Investments made by the council can be classified into one of two main categories:

- Investments held for asset management purposes: and
- Other investments

3.2 In 2023-26 the council's investments will only be held for funding management purposes.

3.3 The council's investment priorities are:

- The security of its reserves
- The liquidity of its investments

3.4 The council will aim to achieve an optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity being maintained.

3.5 All investments will be made in sterling and, as a minimum, surplus funds will be aggregated in an interest-bearing account.

3.6 The Government maintains that the borrowing of monies purely to invest, or to lend and make a return, is unlawful and this council will not engage in such activity.

3.7 In balancing risk against return, this Council is more concerned to avoid risks than to maximise returns.

3.8 The Council will ensure that it has adequate, though not excessive, cash resources to enable it to have the level of funds available which are necessary for the achievement of its key objectives.

4.0 Security of Investments

4.1 For the prudent management of its treasury balances, maintaining sufficient levels of security and liquidity, the Council will use:

- UK banks or UK building societies, local authorities, or other public authorities
- Other recognized funds specifically targeted at the public sector, such as the Public Sector Deposit Fund
- UK FCA regulated qualifying money market funds with a triple A rating.

5.0 Risk Assessment

5.1 The Council's reserves, with the exception of the Public Sector Deposit Fund, are covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme up to £85,000, which is the deposit limit of the scheme. (See paragraph 8.5 below)

5.2 The Council will only invest in institutions of "high credit quality". Investments will be spread over different providers where appropriate to minimise risk.

5.3 The Council will monitor the risk of loss on investments by reference to credit ratings. The Council should aim for ratings equivalent to the Fitch rating A (low default risk). The Council will also have regard for the general economic and political environment in which institutions operate.

- 5.4 The investment position will be reviewed monthly by the Responsible Financial Officer and reported to the Finance and Asset Management Committee at meetings as part of the regular financial report.
- 5.5 The Council does not employ any financial advisors, either in-house or externally, but will rely on information which is publicly available.
- 5.6 The Council will prepare an annual Financial Risk Assessment, to assess internal financial controls, identify risks and evaluate performance against guidelines where appropriate. The Financial Risk Assessment will be published annually.

6.0 Review and Amendment of Regulations

- 6.1 The Investment Strategy will be reviewed every three years. The Investment Strategy will be reviewed by the Responsible Financial Officer and the Finance and Asset Management Committee, which will then make a recommendation to Full Council.

7.0 Transparency

- 7.1 This strategy will be posted on the Town Council's website and a hard copy will be available from the Town Council.

8.0 Account Management Arrangements

- 8.1 The Responsible Financial Officer will report bank account balances to the Finance and Asset Management Committee during each meeting.
- 8.2 Balances may vary due to activity within each account throughout the year.
- 8.3 The Responsible Financial Officer will continually monitor account balances and make recommendations to the Finance and Asset Management Committee based on planned expenditure, aimed at ensuring there is sufficient working capital to meet ongoing commitments and to spread financial risk across financial institutions where possible.
- 8.4 The Responsible Financial Office will monitor the interest rates of the Council's investment to obtain maximum returns. Bank accounts will be maintained to provide effective management of funds and to allow effective day-to-day operations of the Council.

8.5 Financial Services Compensation Scheme

The first £85,000 of investment in each financial institution will be compensated in the event that a bank or building society fails. Where multiple accounts are held with a bank that are part of the same banking group that they are treated as one bank.

The CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund is not covered by the FSCS but the fund was assessed by Fitch in 2023 and provided with a AAmmf rating. CCLA provides an actively managed portfolio and its investments are spread across a diverse range of UK funds, helping to mitigate any exposure to potential failures.

8.6 Risk of Failure

The risk of failure of any of the financial institutions used by the Town Council is low. The UK Government is unlikely to allow a major high street provider to fail as evidenced by the Financial Crisis of 2007-8.