

Our Ref: MD

24 October 2013

To: All Members of the Policy & Resources Committee
(Councillors Mrs Brettell, Campbell, Isaacs, Mrs Evans, James, Mrs Rigby, Taylor and Mrs Tranter (substitute for Cllr Mrs Rigby))

Dear Councillor

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Policy & Resources Committee will meet at **the Town Council's office, Unit 1, Lambourne House, Bridge Cross Road, Burntwood on Thursday 31 October 2013 at 7.00 p.m.** to consider the following business.

Yours sincerely

Mary Danby (Mrs)
Town Clerk

<p style="text-align: center;">PLEASE NOTE THE MEETING VENUE</p>

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

To consider any declarations of interests and consider requests for dispensations.

3. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 29 August 2013 (Minute Nos. 17 - 26) (presented to the Town Council on 11 July 2013) **(ENCLOSURE NO. 1)**.

4. FRANKING MACHINE (Minute No. 20 refers)

The Town Clerk has ascertained that the Council's current franking machine rental agreement is for a six year term which will run until April 2016.

The current supplier has advised that the Town Council's current franking machine will be replaced during 2014 for a machine with Smart Meter capability at no additional cost for the remainder of the rental term.

Given the above information does the Committee still require the Town Clerk to seek alternative quotations (based on outright purchase and various rental options)?

5. CHASE TERRACE PARK: PROVISION OF A CHILDREN'S SWING (P&R Minute No. 21 and BTC Minute No. 50(b) refer)

Lichfield District Council's Greens & Open Spaces Strategic Manager has recently written confirming:

"The parks team have been discussing the opportunity for raising funds for a swing at Chase Terrace Park with County Councillor Mrs Woodward and she has agreed to provide £1000 toward this project through her LMIS fund.

I am delighted that Burntwood Town Council has also agreed to commit £1000 towards the cost of purchasing and installing the swing. The project will be in excess of £2000 and I can confirm that Lichfield District Council will provide any remaining funds needed to complete the project and that all works will be sourced and undertaken through our parks team."

Members are requested to receive and note the above information.

**6. PROPOSAL FOR LONGER OFFICE OPENING HOURS
(Personnel Committee Minute No. 41.2 2012/13, P&R Minute No. 23 and BTC Minute No. 50(c) refer)**

Two spreadsheets are attached for Members consideration. Spreadsheet No. 1 provides a breakdown of telephone calls and visitors to the office over a three month period (23 April – 23 July 2013) and the reasons they contacted the Town Council. Spreadsheet No. 2 details information gathered from a multitude of other local councils with regard to operational hours, when their offices are open to the public, how many staff they have, what services they provide, other functions they may perform and how they publicise themselves. **(Enclosure Nos. 2A and 2B)**

The Town Clerk seeks direction in how Members wish to progress this item.

7. BURNTWOOD TOWN COUNCIL'S OFFICE: REPLACEMENT WINDOWS

Members have previously been made aware that the Landlord has offered to replace four windows to the ground and first floors at the rear of the building and the two front windows on the first floor at the Town Council's office (subject to the Town Council gaining the necessary Planning Permission) as part of the works which seen the former Snooker Hall converted into apartments.

A Planning Application is due to be submitted in the near future which covers replacing all the existing windows (with the exception of the shop front and door).

The opportunity presents itself for the Town Council to replace the remaining seven windows on the ground and first floor along the side of the building. Provision has been made within the Council's Earmarked Reserves for replacement windows to be installed during the 2013/14 financial year.

The current windows are single-glazed and metal framed. They are not well sealed at the ground floor level (the blinds move significantly away from the window when the weather is windy) and they do not offer good energy efficiency.

A quotation has been sourced from the same installer used by the Landlord for the seven windows along the side of the building. This means that they would match those to be installed by the Landlord and give a better visual appearance than perhaps could be achieved by using another supplier.

The cost of supplying and installing the windows has been quoted at:

£2,229.17 plus VAT (£2,675 including VAT)

Does the Committee wish to accept the above quotation?

8. BTC OFFICE: QUOTATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO HEATING

Members have been made aware previously that the heating provision at the Town Council's office is inadequate. Provision has been made within the Council's Earmarked Reserves for additional heating to be installed during the 2013/14 financial year. Four quotations have been sourced for supply and installation:

Company A

Main Entrance: Supply and install 1 x 3.4kw storage heater
Main Office: Supply and install 1 x 2.55kw storage heater
1st Floor Corridor: Supply and install 1 x 1.7kw storage heater
1st Floor Office: Supply and install 1 x 2.55kw storage heater

Total cost labour and materials: £1,790.00 plus VAT (£2,148.00 including VAT)

Company B

Option 1 – Storage Heaters

Main Entrance: Supply and install 1 x 3.4kw storage heater
Main Office: Supply and install 1 x 2.55kw storage heater
1st Floor Corridor: Supply and install 1 x 2.55kw storage heater
1st Floor Office: Supply and install 1 x 2.55kw storage heater

Total cost labour and materials: £1,694.00 plus VAT (£2,034.00 including VAT)

Option 2 – Rointe Digital Heating K Series Low Consumption Radiators (c30% less than the running cost of storage heaters)

Main Entrance: Supply and install 1 x 1.2kw heater
Main Office: Supply and install 1 x 900 watt heater
1st Floor Corridor: Supply and install 1 x 1.12kw heater
1st Floor Office: Supply and install 1 x 900 watt heater

Total cost labour and materials: £1,798.00 plus VAT (£2,157.60 including VAT)

Company C

Main Entrance: Supply and install 1 x 3.4kw storage heater
Main Office: Supply and install 1 x 2.6kw storage heater
1st Floor Corridor: Supply and install 1 x 1.7kw storage heater
1st Floor Office: Supply and install 1 x 2.6kw storage heater

Total cost labour and materials: £2,300.00 plus VAT (£2,760.00 including VAT)

Company D

Main Entrance: Supply and install 1 x 3.4kw storage heater
Main Office: Supply and install 1 x 2.4kw storage heater
1st Floor Corridor: Supply and install 2 x 1.7kw storage heater
1st Floor Office: Supply and install 1 x 1.7kw storage heater

Total cost labour and materials: £2,480.00 plus VAT (£2,976.00 including VAT)

RECOMMENDATION: That the Town Council commission Company B to supply and install Rointe Digital Hating K Series Low Consumption Radiators (Option 2) at a cost of £1,798 plus VAT (£2,157.60 including VAT).

9. BUS SHELTERS

9A Replacement Bus Shelter: Jct Farewell Lane/Lichfield Road, Burntwood

To consider quotations to replacement the existing timber bus shelter located at the junction of Farewell Lane/Lichfield Road, Burntwood (**ENCLOSURE NO. 3**).

9B Relocation of Bus Shelter from Cannock Road, Chase Terrace (opposite Water Street) to Milestone Way, Chasetown (opposite Aldi Supermarket)

Quotation provided by Company D (see Enclosure No. 3):

By way of Hiab Crane vehicle – removal of existing bus shelter from Cannock Road, Chase Terrace to Milestone Way, Chasetown (including local reinstatement of footway)

£900.00 plus VAT (£1,080.00 including VAT)

10. REVIEW: FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND DUTIES OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

The Committee is required to review the Council's Financial Regulations and the Duties of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) annually and to make recommendations as appropriate or necessary to the Town Council on any amendments that are required. (**Enclosure Nos. 4A and 4B**)

11. WORLD WAR I CENTENARY

Members are reminded that events to mark the World War I Centenary may take place during 2014-2018.

Members are requested to consider what type of event(s) the Council might wish to offer to mark the Centenary and when that event(s) might take place.

12. 2013/14 EXTERNAL AUDIT (ENCLOSURE NO. 5)

13. 2013/14 BUDGET AS AT 17 OCTOBER 2013 (ENCLOSURE NOS. 6A AND 6B)

14. ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING DATE: 28 NOVEMBER 2013

The Policy & Resources Committee Chairman, Councillor Campbell and the Town Clerk consider that it would be beneficial for the Committee to consider the draft 2014/15 budget at a separate meeting. Members are requested to note that the additional Committee meeting will take place on Thursday 28 November 2013 – the meeting agenda and associated papers will be distributed in the normal manner at least one week prior to the meeting date.

15. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chairman will move:

That under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meeting) Act 1960 (Section 2) (and as expended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

**16. BURNTWOOD TOWN STRATEGY: ACTION AREA 3
PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESS AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP**

The Committee is requested to consider a proposal for a pilot Ring & Ride Scheme submitted by the above Working Group (**ENCLOSURE NO. 7**)

**17. BURNTWOOD CEMETERY: GATE KEEPER (P&R Minute No. 24(c) refers)
(ENCLOSURE NO. 8)**

18. PROPOSAL RE THE TOWN COUNCIL'S TELEPHONE SYSTEM (ENCLOSURE NO. 9)

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD AT LAMBOURNE HOUSE, BRIDGE CROSS ROAD, BURNTWOOD
ON THURSDAY 29 AUGUST 2013 COMMENCING AT 7.00 P.M.**

PRESENT

Councillor Campbell (in the Chair)
Councillors Mrs Brettell, Mrs Evans, Isaacs, James, Mrs Rigby and Taylor

In attendance

Mrs M Danby, Town Clerk

17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None, all members present.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

None declared.

19. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee held on 10 July 2013 (Minute Nos. 6 - 16) be approved as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

Minute No. 11.2, 1st paragraph, 5th line to be amended from:
"... "Welcome" signage at all entry points into Burntwood, ..."

to:

"... "Welcome" signage on all arterial roads into Burntwood, ..."

Minute No. 14, 2nd paragraph, 2nd line to be amended from:
"... served by someone on a short-term ..."

to:

"... served by individuals on fixed term ..."

20. FRANKING MACHINE (Minute No. 13 refers)

Members received the Town Clerk's report.

RESOLVED That:

- a) The report be received and noted.
- b) This matter be deferred pending receipt of information detailing the cost of:

- (i) A replacement machine on a five year or less rental agreement (2 or 3 years);
- (ii) A replacement machine on a five year rental agreement with the option to purchase at the end of term;
- (iii) The outright purchase of a replacement machine

21. CHASE TERRACE PARK: PROVISION OF A CHILDREN'S SWING

County Councillor Mrs Woodward had approached the Town Council asking it to consider part-funding the provision of a double children's swing in Chase Terrace Park. The swing would be installed onto the grass area adjacent to the existing play equipment and the appropriate level of safer surfacing would also need to be installed.

A ball park estimate of £3,000 for the supply and installation of the swing and safer surfacing had been provided by Lichfield District Council (LDC).

Councillor Mrs Woodward was prepared to consider using some her LMIS funding towards the cost. It is understood that LDC would not be able to assist financially though it may be able to install the equipment at no cost.

RECOMMENDATIONS That:

- a) That the Town Council could look to committing pump priming money to a maximum of £1,000 towards the cost of the providing and installing the children's swing with the remainder being provided via Lichfield District Council (LDC) and County Councillor Mrs Woodward through her LMIS funding.
- b) That the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Town Council and the Town Clerk be delegated to agree the Town Council's proportion of the above proposal once the committed contribution levels from LDC and County Councillor Mrs Woodward had been confirmed.

22. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS: HOLIDAYS/SICKNESS/EMERGENCIES – FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Members were informed of the arrangements which are in place for either the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Town Council to enable them to make contact with the Council's bank at any time when the Town Clerk is not in the office for an extended period.

RESOLVED That the information be received and noted.

23. PROPOSAL FOR LONGER OFFICE OPENING HOURS (Personnel Committee Minute No. 41.2 2012/13 refers)

Members were advised that the Personnel Committee had recently considered whether the Town Council's office should open for longer hours and staff had been

consulted at that time to gauge whether they would be willing/able to take on more hours should the need be confirmed.

The Personnel Committee had agreed that a log be kept for three months of all visitors to the office and telephone calls and the reason for those visits/calls and to judge whether the number of people contacting the office outside the current opening hours (9.30 am – 3pm, Monday - Friday) made a viable case for longer opening hours to be agreed. The data was captured by all office-based Administrative Assistants and the Town Clerk and covered the period 23 April – 23 July 2013 inclusive.

The data shows that:

374 telephone calls were received during office hours
72 telephone calls were received outside office hours

228 visitors attended during office hours
4 visitors attended outside office hours

RESOLVED That this item be deferred to the next meeting to enable the Town Clerk to:

- a) Consult with other Town and Parish councils to ascertain the times which their offices are open to the public, how they operate and how they publicise themselves.
- b) Analyse the data captured from the log of visitors/telephone calls and the reasons why those people were contacting the Town Council.

24. 2012/13 INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

Members received the Internal Auditor's report for the 2012/13 financial year. They were pleased to note that the Internal Auditor was happy with the manner in which the Town Council conducts its financial affairs, noting that "Record keeping is to a very high standard and is to be commended.". The Internal Auditor had made four recommendations for Members consideration:

- a) "The Council should continue to refresh the earmarked Election reserve from the 2013/14 – 2014/15 Precept receipts"

RESOLVED That this recommendation will be implemented for 2014/15 – funding has been included in the 2013/14 for this purpose.

- b) "It has been the Council's practice to maintain two registers of assets, one covering land, bus shelters and civic regalia (current value £31,252) and one covering all other property such as computers, office furnishings and equipment (current value c£43,000). Only the former schedule has been recorded in box 9 ("Total fixed assets") of the Annual Return in the past and there seems no good reason why the two schedules should not be combined and reported. I shall continue to monitor the combined lists in any circumstance."

RESOLVED That this recommendation be agreed and that it will be implemented for the 2013/14 financial year onwards.

- c) "In my interim audit I raised a query regarding the employment status of the person responsible for Cemetery Security as his remuneration is at a level which HMR&C now require proper PAYE reporting (even if tax or national Insurance is now due). The Clerk has agreed to review this matter."

The Town Clerk reported that this matter is being followed up and a resolution will be sought as soon as possible.

RESOLVED That this matter should be resolved by the end of October 2013 at the latest.

- d) "Earmarked reserved properly agreed by the Council should be reflected by corresponding entries in the books of account and properly shown on the end year balance sheet."

RESOLVED That this recommendation be agreed and that it will be implemented for the 2013/14 financial year onwards.

25. 2013/14 BUDGET AS AT 22 AUGUST 2013

RESOLVED That the report be received and noted.

26. BURNTWOOD TOWN STRATEGY ACTION AREA 5: BUSINESS AND EMPLOYERS SUPPORT WORKING GROUP

Members considered the following bid submitted by the above Working Group:

"Introduction

In March 2011 BTC published the Burntwood Town Strategy. A separate committee was established to implement Action Area 5. The committee met and considered the options available with the known resources. A decision was taken to see the LDC High Street Innovation Programme as the main initiative to support, in the first instance, the objectives outlined in the strategy.

It has taken over a year to see the High Street Innovation Programme starting to implement the first objectives and bring together some traders from the existing High Street shops. This work has clarified what is realistic to expect from the High Street traders initiative and so allow a BTC initiative to work alongside the High St traders group.

BTC has set aside monies for this financial year to implement the whole of the Town Strategy and the following proposal is made for consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee in the first instance.

BTC Strategy Statement

The following four initial actions were agreed:

- Work with local businesses and economic development agents to encourage local expansions, business in-movement and start-up, and thus increased local job opportunities.
- Support the growth and development of locally-based community and social enterprises.
- Work towards linking the town more closely to the estate business community for mutual benefits.
- Encourage the development of a local Chamber of Business and Trade for the area. If appropriate a sub-group of the existing Lichfield and Tamworth Chamber of Commerce and Industry, by identifying key initiators amongst the business community.

Proposal

Existing staff of the Burntwood Town Council are currently preparing a data base of owners of local businesses in Burntwood. This data base will include owners who work from home, those operating from business estates in Burntwood and those operating from retail outlets.

Once completed this data base can be used to set out the business and employers support plan proposed by BTC.

BTC will need extra resources in order to engage with businesses and it is proposed that a sum of £3,000 is allocated to fund an honorarium. BTC would advertise and recruit a suitably qualified and experienced person with proven business and organisational development skills. The work would be time limited over an agreed period of say five months and depending upon outcomes a further period of work could be planned with funding from a combination of sources that might include BTC.

Specific objectives would include the development of a local Chamber of Trade and Commerce.

The appointment would be accountable to the BTC Town Clerk with a steering group based on the existing Business Development Sub-Group.

If this initial proposal found favour then detailed work would be undertaken to define objectives in more detail."

RECOMMENDATION That the Town Council agree to the allocation of £3,000 to fund an honorarium and that the Working Group be authorised to progress the proposal as set out above.

(The Meeting closed at 8.15p.m.)

Signed

Date

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE
31 OCTOBER 2013

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9A
REPLACEMENT BUS SHELTER: JCT FAREWELL LANE/LICHFIELD ROAD, BURNTWOOD

Members will be aware that the existing timber bus shelter located at the junction of Farewell Lane/Lichfield Road, Burntwood is in very poor condition the Committee is requested to consider the following quotations for its replacement. Illustrations from each prospective supplier will be available at the meeting.

Company A

Timber shelters are mainly constructed in 16mm cedar tongued and grooved timber. The sides and backs of the shelter have cavity walls, sealed at the ends with Canadian softwood. Shelter roofs are of single 16mm cedar, covered with green mineralised bitumastic felt. A solid fascia is placed along the edge of the roof for appearance and strength. The roof secures to the 3" x 1.5" rafters by means of galvanised plates.

Option 1

"Petworth"	3.05m x 1.22m	£2,785.28	Supply only
		£ 349.80	Optional seat to suit
		£ 600.00	Installation
		£ 350.00	Removal of existing shelter
		£4,085.08 plus VAT (£4,902.10 including VAT)	

Option 2

"Thursley"	2.44m x 1.22m	£2,400.20	Supply only
		£ 349.80	Optional seat to suit
		£ 600.00	Installation
		£ 350.00	Removal of existing shelter
		£3,700.00 plus VAT (£4,440.00 including VAT)	

Company B

Shelter constructed in hardwood from sustainable, well managed FSC certified forests with polycarbonate glazing and seat as standard.

"Surrey"	2.48m x 1.29m	£8,786.00	Complete, including removal of existing shelter
		£8,786.00 plus VAT (£10,543.20 including VAT)	

Company C

Constructed from the latest high quality materials including stainless steel for strength, durability and quality. With high resistance to corrosion and ideal for both rural and urban sites. Minimal maintenance required.

Enclosed configuration with one front entrance and barrelled roof (excluding removal and disposal of existing shelter)

2.5m x 1.5m	£2,965.00	Supply only
	£ 270.00	Basic seating bar 80mm x 2m
	£ 595.00	Installation
	£ 195.00	Removal of existing shelter
	£4,025.00 plus VAT (£4,830.00 including VAT)	

Company D

A versatile metal shelter incorporating style, high quality and durability:

"Peak" enclosed barrelled roof shelter with single bar perch seating

2.25m x 1.35m	£2,665.00	Supplied and installed
	£ 280.00	Removal of existing shelter
	£2,945.00 plus VAT (£3,534.00 including VAT)	

RECOMMENDED OPTIONS:

- a)** Timber bus shelter
Company A: "Thursley" timber bus shelter (Option 2), including the removal and disposal of the existing shelter at a total cost of £3,700.00 plus VAT (£4,440.00 including VAT).

Or

- b)** Metal bus shelter
Company D: "Peak" enclosed barrelled roof shelter, including the removal and disposal of the existing shelter at a total cost of £2,945.00 plus VAT (£3,534.00 including VAT)



BURNTWOOD TOWN COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

(ADOPTED 20 SEPTEMBER 2007)

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19.0	Revision of Financial Regulations

1.0 GENERAL

- 1.1 These financial regulations govern the conduct of the financial transactions of the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council.
- 1.2 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), under the policy direction of the Council, shall be responsible for the proper administration of the Council's affairs.
- 1.3 The RFO shall be responsible for the production of financial management information.

2.0 ANNUAL ESTIMATES

- 2.1 Each Committee (if any) shall formulate and submit proposals to the Council in respect of revenue and capital costs for the following financial year, not later than the end of November each year.
- 2.2 Detailed estimated of all receipts and payments for the year shall be prepared each year by the RFO.
- 2.3 The Council shall review the estimates not later than the end of January following the November (see 2.1) and shall fix the precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The RFO shall supply each member with a copy of the approved estimates (budgets).
- 2.4 The annual budgets shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.
- 2.5 The Council shall prepare and have regard to, a three year forecast of Revenue and Capital Receipts and Payments, which shall be prepared at the same time as the annual Budget or Estimates.

3.0 BUDGETARY CONTROL

- 3.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be incurred up to the amounts included in the approved budget.
- 3.2 No expenditure may be incurred which exceeds the amount provided in the revenue budget unless a virement has been approved by the Council.
- 3.3 The RFO shall regularly provide the Council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure against that planned.
- 3.4 The Clerk/RFO may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council, which is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement, or other work, which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £1,000. The Clerk/RFO shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 3.5 Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year unless approved by the Council.

- 3.6 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into, or tender accepted involving capital expenditure, unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 3.7 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

4.0 ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT

- 4.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 as amended in 2003 (see: Guidance on the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003, ODPM Circular 04/2003).
- 4.2 The RFO shall be responsible for completing the annual financial statements of the Council as soon as practicable, after the year end of the financial year and shall submit them and report thereon to the Council.
- 4.3 The RFO shall be responsible for completing the accounts of the Council contained in the Annual Return (as supplied by the Auditor appointed from time to time by the Audit Commission), and for submitting the Annual Return for approval and authorisation by the Council, within the timescale set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 as amended, or set by the Auditor.
- 4.4 The RFO shall be responsible for ensuring that there is adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting, financial and other operations, in accordance with Regulation 5 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 as amended. Any officer or member of the Council shall, if the RFO or Internal Auditor requires, make available such documents of the purpose of the Council, which appear to the RFO or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit and shall supply the RFO or Internal Auditor with such information and explanation as the RFO or Internal Auditor considers necessary for that purpose.
- 4.5 The Internal Auditor shall carry out the work required by the RFO, or by the Council, with a view to satisfactory completion of the Auditor's Report section of the Annual Return, as compiled annually by the Audit Commission. The Internal Auditor, who shall be competent and independent of the operations of the Council, shall report to the Council in writing on a regular basis with a minimum of one annual report in respect of each financial year.
- 4.6 The RFO shall make arrangement for the opportunity for inspection of the accounts, books and vouchers required by the Audit Commission Act 1998 section 15 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 as amended.
- 4.7 The RFO shall, as soon as practicable, bring to the attention of all Councillors, any correspondence or report from the Internal or External Auditor, unless the correspondence is of a purely administrative matter.

5.0 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND CHEQUES

- 5.1 The Council's banking arrangements shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council. They shall be regularly reviewed for efficiency.
- 5.2 A schedule of payments made since the previous meeting or required, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting, shall be prepared by the RFO and, together with the relevant invoices, be presented to the Council and shall be initialled by the Chairman of the Meeting. If more appropriate, the details may be shown in the Minutes of the Meeting.
- 5.3 All elected Members (22 in total) and the Town Clerk are authorised to sign cheques. Cheques drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule referred to in paragraph 5.2, or in accordance with paragraph 6.4, shall either be signed by three members of Council or two Members and the Town Clerk.
- 5.4 To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice, or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

6.0 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

- 6.1 All payments (other than petty cash (6.4) shall be effected by cheque or other order drawn on the Council's bankers including BACS payments.
- 6.2 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Clerk/RFO. The Clerk/RFO shall satisfy him/herself that the work, goods and services, to which the invoice relates, shall have been received, carried out, examined and approved.
- 6.3 The RFO shall examine invoices in relation to arithmetic accuracy and shall analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading.
- 6.4 The RFO may provide petty cash to officers for purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made shall be forwarded to the RFO with a claim for reimbursement:
- (a) The RFO shall maintain a petty cash float of £200 for the purpose of defraying operational and other expenses. Vouchers for payments made from petty cash shall be kept to substantiate the payment.
 - (b) Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float, but must be separately banked on the next available working day, 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 5.2 above.

7.0 PAYMENT OF SALARIES

- 7.1 The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating. Salaries shall be agreed by the Council.
- 7.2 Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salary such as may be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, may be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates, provided that each payment is reported to, and ratified by, the next available Council Meeting.

8.0 LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

- 8.1 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with Council policy.
- 8.2 The Council's Investment Policy, shall be in accordance with the Trustee Act 2000, and shall be reviewed on a regular basis (at least annually).
- 8.3 All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.
- 8.4 All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any applicant for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose.
- 8.5 All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

9.0 INCOME

- 9.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied, shall be agreed annually by the Council and notified to the RFO. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.
- 9.3 The Council will review all fees and charges annually, following a report of the Clerk/ RFO.
- 9.4 Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the Council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers, with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6 The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying in slip.
- 9.7 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.

- 9.8 The RFO shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 Section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 9.9 Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the Council, to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.
- 9.10 Income received must not be paid into the petty cash float but must be separately banked, as provided elsewhere within these regulations.

10.0 ORDERS

- 10.1 An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services, unless a formal contract is to be prepared, or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.
- 10.2 Order books (if used) shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 10.3 All members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order is to ensure as far as reasonable and practicable, that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any *de minima* provisions in Regulation 11.1 below.

11.0 CONTRACTS

- 11.1 Procedures as to contract are laid down as follows:-
- (a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency, provided that these regulations shall not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:-
- (i) for the supply of gas, electricity, 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 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 £250 (in excess of this sum the Clerk/RFO shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council);

- (vi) for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed price.
- (b) Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £20,000 in value, for the supply of goods or materials, or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a), the Clerk/RFO shall invite tenders from at least three companies to be taken from the appropriate approved list.
- (c) Where applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts, to enable a price to be negotiated without competition, the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.
- (d) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract, and the Clerk/RFO shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall, in addition, state that a tendering company 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.
- (e) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk/RFO in the presence of at least one member of Council.
- (f) If less than three tenders are received for contracts over £20,000, or if all the tenders are identical, the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials, or executing the works.
- (g) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation, shall contain a statement to the effect of Standing Orders 60, 62 and 63.
- (h) When it is to enter into a contract less than £20,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials, or for the execution of works or specialist services, other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are expected as set out in paragraph (a), the Clerk/RFO shall obtain three quotations (priced descriptions of proposed supply); where the value is below £5,000 and above £1,000, the Clerk or RFO shall strive to obtain three estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10 (3) above shall apply.
- (i) The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

12.0 PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACT FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

- 12.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the Clerk/RFO, upon authorised certificates of the architect, or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholdings as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 12.2 Where contracts provide for payment by instalments, the RFO shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case, where it is estimated that the total cost of work

carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more, a report shall be submitted to the Council.

- 12.3 Any variations to, addition to or omission from a contract, must be approved by the Council and the Clerk/RFO in writing to the Contractor, the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.

13.0 STORES AND EQUIPMENT

- 13.1 The officer in charge of each section shall be responsible for the care and custody of stores and equipment in that section.
- 13.2 Delivery notes shall be obtained in respect of all goods received into store or otherwise delivered, and goods must be checked as to order and quantity at the time delivery is made.
- 13.3 Stocks shall be kept at the minimum levels consistent with operational requirements.
- 13.4 The Clerk/RFO shall be responsible for periodic checks of stocks and stores at least annually.

14.0 PROPERTIES

- 14.1 The Clerk/RFO shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds of properties owned by the Council. The RFO shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties owned by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which, held in accordance with Regulation 4 (3) (b) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 as amended.
- 14.2 No property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible, movable property, does not exceed £100.

15.0 INSURANCE

- 15.1 Following an annual risk assessment, the Clerk/RFO shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.
- 15.2 The Clerk/RFO shall give prompt notification to the Council of all new risks, properties or vehicles, which require to be insured, and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 15.3 The Clerk/RFO shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby, and annually review it.
- 15.4 The Clerk/RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability or damage, or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the Council at the next available meeting.

- 15.5 All appropriate employees of the Council shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance, which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the Council.

16.0 CHARITIES

- 16.1 Where the Council is sole trustee of a charitable body, the Clerk/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 the Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk/RFO shall arrange for any Audit, or Independent Examination, as may be required by Charity Law, or any Governing Document.

17.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 17.1 The Clerk/RFO shall prepare and promote risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Council.
- 17.2 When considering any new activity, the Clerk/RFO shall prepare a draft Risk Management Policy for the activity, and shall bring a draft addressing the legal and financial liabilities and Risk Management issues that arise to Council for consideration and, if thought appropriate, adoption.

18.0 REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT

- 18.1 Regulations 4 and 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations (2003) require bodies to review the effectiveness of their system of internal control and audit once a year and for the findings of the review to be considered by an appropriate committee or the whole body. For Burntwood Town Council it will be the whole Council.
- 18.2 In accordance with guidance in the Appendix to the NALC Financial Update of March 2007, Burntwood Town Council will make an annual assessment in relation to:
- The scope of internal audit
 - The independence of internal audit
 - The competence of internal audit
 - Relationships (communication) between RFO and internal auditor
 - Audit planning and reporting.
- 18.3 The review will be conducted by the Leader of the Council and the Town Clerk of Burntwood Town Council who will report to the whole Council as to whether the internal audit system is effective using Table 1 below.

INTERNAL CONTROL	SUGGESTED TESTING
Proper Bookkeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the cashbook maintained and up-to-date? ▪ Is the cashbook arithmetic correct? ▪ Is the cashbook regularly balanced?
a) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations adopted and applied b) Payments Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has the council formally adopted Standing Orders and Financial Regulations? ▪ Has a Responsible Financial Officer been appointed with specific duties? ▪ Have items or services above the <i>de minimus</i> amount been competitively purchased? ▪ Are payments in the cashbook supported by invoices, authorised and minuted? ▪ Has VAT on payments been identified, recorded and reclaimed? ▪ Is s.137 expenditure separately recorded and within statutory limited?
Risk Management Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does a review of the minutes identify any unusual financial activity? ▪ Do minutes record the council carrying out an annual risk assessment? ▪ Is insurance cover appropriate and adequate? ▪ Are internal financial controls documented and regularly reviewed?
Budgetary Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has the council prepared an annual budget in support of its precept? ▪ Is actual expenditure against the budget regularly reported to the council? ▪ Are there any significant unexplained variances from budget?
Income Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is income properly recorded and promptly banked? ▪ Does the precept recorded agree to the Council Tax authority's notification? ▪ Are security controls over cash and near-cash adequate and effective?
Petty Cash Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is all petty cash recorded and supported by VAT invoices/receipts? ▪ Is petty cash expenditure reported to each council meeting? ▪ Is petty cash reimbursement carried out regularly?
Payroll Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do all employees have contracts of employment with clear terms and conditions? ▪ Do salaries paid agree with those approved by the council? ▪ Are other payments to employees reasonable and approved by the council? ▪ Have PAYE/NIC/Local Government pension contributions been properly operated by the council as an employer?

Assets Controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Does the council maintain a register of all material assets owned or in its care?▪ Are the assets and investments registers up-to-date?▪ Do asset insurance valuations agree with those in the asset register?
Bank Reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Is there bank reconciliation for each account?▪ Is a bank reconciliation carried out regularly and in a timely fashion?▪ Are there any unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation?
Year End Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Are year end accounts prepared on the correct accounting basis (Receipts and Payments or Income and Expenditure)?▪ Do accounts agree with the cashbook?▪ Is there an audit trail from underlying financial records to the accounts?▪ Where appropriate, have debtors and creditors been properly recorded?

Table 1

19.0 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 make such amendments to them as are appropriate.

RECORD OF REVISIONS		
REVISION NO.	DATE APPROVED	REASON FOR REVISION
1.0	20 September 2007	Original document
1.1	17 July 2008	Addition of Section 18.0: Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit
1.2	14 January 2010	Revised Petty Cash float from £100 to £200 (6.4(a))
1.3	19 May 2011	Revised Banking Arrangements and Cheques to include the Town Clerk as a signatory (5.3)



DUTIES OF THE RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER (RFO)
ADOPTED 20 SEPTEMBER 2007

- A. To prepare financial reports for Committees (if any) and the Council. These reports will cover budget monitoring, fund balances, receipts to date, payroll summary, payment of accounts, and other relevant current matters.
- B. To prepare draft estimates, when approved by the Council these will form the annual budget monitoring during the year. To report thereon to the relevant Committees (if any) and the Council at least quarterly.
- C. To submit the precept to Lichfield District Council and supply any breakdown requested.
- D. To bank regularly all monies received by the Council.
- E. To ensure that all money due to the Council is billed and collected promptly.
- F. To manage cash flow and bank transfers.
- G. To control payments by cheque.
- H. To liaise with the Staffordshire County Council to ensure that accurate information is exchanged to ensure the overall management of the Local Government Pension Scheme is undertaken satisfactorily.
- I. To take overall responsibility for submission of VAT returns and to deal with VAT inspections.
- J. To verify and code (i.e. allocate to expenditure heads) suppliers invoices prior to certification for payment.
- K. To prepare and balance final accounts in accordance with the Regulations and report thereon to the Council.
- L. To produce accounts and records for external and internal audit in accordance with the Regulations.
- M. To arrange for internal audit material of all aspects of the Council's financial affairs in accordance with Regulations 4.4 and 4.5.
- N. To monitor compliance with the Council's Financial Regulations and to ensure correct financial systems are in place.
- O. To manage insurance risks. To process claims as necessary. To report annually to Committees (if any) or the Council on insurance risk covered (Risk Assessment review).
- P. To maintain the Council's register of property and assets (Regulation 14.1).
- Q. If the Council's accounts are computerised, to be familiar with the system in place.