

FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL



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Date of publication: 28 April 2026

AGENDA

Meeting: **Folkestone Town Council Meeting**
Date: **5 May 2026**
Time: **7.00 p.m.**
Place: **Town Council Chamber, Town Hall, 1-2 Guildhall Street, Folkestone**

To: **Town Councillors**

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to attend a meeting of the Folkestone Town Council on the date and at the time and place shown above to transact the business shown on the agenda below.

Any member who wishes to have information on any matter arising on the agenda which is not fully covered in these papers is requested to contact the Town Clerk prior to the meeting.

Toni Brenchley
Town Clerk

Prayers

TOWN MAYOR 2025/26

The Town Mayor will reflect on the past 12 months.

- 1. ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR 2026/27 AND ACCEPTANCE OF DECLARATION OF OFFICE**
- 2. ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR 2026/27 AND ACCEPTANCE OF DECLARATION OF OFFICE**
- 3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of either personal or prejudicial interest that Members may wish to make.

5. APPOINTMENT OF TOWN MAYOR'S

- a. **CHAPLAIN 2026/27**
- b. **CONSORT 2026/27**
- c. **CADET 2026/27**

6. MINUTES

To receive the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 21 April 2026 and to ask the Town Mayor to sign them as a correct record.

7. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Councillors are requested to note dates of forthcoming Civic Events:

VE Day Service (RBL)	8 May 2026
Samuel Plimsoll Service	30 May 2026
Normandy D-Day Service	6 June 2026
William Harvey Sunday	7 June 2026
Armed Forces Day	27 June 2026
Town Sunday	28 June 2026
Blessing of the Fisheries	28 June 2026
Canada Day	1 July 2026
VJ Day Annual Service	15 August 2026
Battle of Britain Wreath Laying	15 September 2026
Trafalgar Day Service	19 October 2026
Dedication of Garden of Remembrance	1 November 2026
Remembrance Sunday	8 November 2026
Machine Gun Corps (RBL)	11 November 2026
Holocaust Memorial Day	27 January 2027

8. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES

A schedule setting out proposals for the Council's Committees 2026/27 is attached. Committees will appoint their Chairs and Vice Chairs at their first meeting, review the terms of reference and make proposals to appoint members to working groups.

9. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES 2026/27

The Town Council is asked to appoint Councillors to outside bodies as follows:

- i) Kent Association of Local Councils (two Councillors) – Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly and Councillor Jane Darling.
- ii) John Bowley and Sherwood Almshouses Charity (four representatives for a four year term) – *There is provision for the Council to appoint non-Council members as trustees in the scheme document* – Councillor Roger West, Councillor Lucy McGirr, Mr Paul Bingham and Mr Richard Wallace.
- iii) Folkestone Municipal Charities (the Mayor and four Councillors) – The Town Mayor, Councillor Adrian Lockwood, Councillor Nicola Keen, Councillor Roger West and Councillor Belinda Walker.

- iv) Etaples/Folkestone Twinning Association (one Councillor) – Councillor Adrian Lockwood.
- v) Cinque Ports Champion (four year term) – Councillor Belinda Walker.
- vi) NALC Super Council Network – Councillor Peter Gane.
- vii) Mechinagar/Folkestone Twinning Association – Councillor Jackie Meade, Councillor Belinda Walker, Councillor Peter Gane, Councillor Kieran Leigh, Councillor Abena Akuffo-Kelly, Councillor Nicola Keen, Councillor Jane Darling and Councillor John Renshaw.
- viii) Folkestone Community Forum – Councillor Belinda Walker and Councillor Jane Darling.
- ix) Dover, Deal & District Advice Bureau - Councillor Lucy McGirr.
- x) Armed Forces Champion – Councillor Belinda Walker

10. APPOINTMENT OF BANK SIGNATORIES

To authorise the signatories on payments as follows:

- Town Mayor, Deputy Town Mayor and serving Past Mayors
- Chair and Vice Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee
- Chair and Vice Chair of Planning Committee
- Chair and Vice Chair of Community Services Committee (*until 9 June 26*)
- Chair and Vice Chair of Climate & Environment Committee (*until 9 June 26*)
- Chair and Vice Chair of Community, Climate & Environment (*from 9 June 26*)

11. POLICY REVIEW

In line with NALC guidance, Council's policies require re-adoption annually.

1. Standing Orders, with an additional paragraph (see Item 4.e) are attached for adoption.
2. Financial Regulations
3. Other policies requiring re-adoption can be found on our website:

www.folkestone-tc.gov.uk/council/policies-procedures/

12. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2026/27

The approved provisional schedule for Council and Committee Meetings is attached for noting.

13. TIME AND DATE OF THE NEXT MEETINGS OF FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

Annual Town Assembly – Tuesday 12 May 2026 at 7.00 p.m.

Full Council AGAR Meeting – 11 June 2026 at 6.00 p.m.

Ordinary Full Council Meeting – 17 September 2026 at 7.00 p.m.

Councillors on Committee

Cllr Abena Akuffo-Kelly
 Cllr Charlie Bain Smith
 Cllr Bridget Chapman
 Cllr Jane Darling
 Cllr Laura Davison
 Cllr Christine Dickinson
 Cllr Peter Gane

Cllr Nicola Keen
Cllr Kieran Leigh
Cllr Adrian Lockwood
Cllr Connor McConville
Cllr Liz McShane
Cllr Lucy McGirr
Cllr Jackie Meade
Cllr Tim Prater
Cllr John Renshaw
Cllr Belinda Walker
Cllr Roger West

Parking available for Councillors @ 6.00pm on the precinct area at the front of the Town Hall.



Folkestone Town Council

MINUTES of the Extraordinary Full Council Meeting held at the Town Hall, Folkestone on Tuesday, 21 April 2026 at 7.30 p.m.

TOWN COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Councillors Lucy McGirr, Christine Dickinson, Kieran Leigh (7:32pm), Nicola Keen, Adrian Lockwood, Jane Darling, Connor McConville, Laura Davison, Roger West, Liz McShane, Peter Gane, Tim Prater, John Renshaw, Belinda Walker and Bridget Chapman.

APOLOGIES:

Councillors Abena Akuffo-Kelly, Charles Bain Smith and Jackie Meade.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Toni Brenchley (Town Clerk)
Jennifer Griffin (Administration Officer)

Prayers were read by Councillor Nicola Keen.

No questions were received.

2234. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Abena Akuffo-Kelly, Charles Bain Smith and Jackie Meade.

RESOLVED: To accept the apologies from Councillors Abena Akuffo-Kelly, Charles Bain Smith and Jackie Meade.

Proposed: Councillor Peter Gane
Seconded: Councillor Nicola Keen
Voting: F: 14, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

2235. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Tim Prater declared an interest, as a Kent County Councillor in Agenda Item 2237.

Councillor Nicola Keen declared an interest in Agenda Item 2237, as a KCC employee.

Councillor Kirean Leigh arrived at 7:32pm.

2236. MINUTES

Council was asked to receive and authorise the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 12 March 2026 and to ask the Town Mayor to sign them as a correct record.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 12 March 2026 be received and signed as a correct record.

Proposed: Councillor John Renshaw
Seconded: Councillor Bridget Chapman
Voting: F: 15, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The remainder of the Agenda classified Agenda Item 2237 as disclosing exempt information under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the local Government Act 1972 (as amended) thereby excluding the press and public from the meeting whilst this item is debated. Press and members of the public should now leave.

RESOLVED: To exclude the Press and public.

Proposed: Councillor Nicola Keen
Seconded: Councillor Roger West
Voting: F: 15, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

2237. POTENTIAL ACQUISITION OF FORMER LIBRARY BUILDING

Report C/26/416 was presented to Council outlining the opportunities, risks, and strategic implications of FTC acquiring 2 Grace Hill (former Library), currently owned by Kent County Council (KCC).

The Town Clerk also advised Council that, as at 31 March 2026, the general reserves stand at approximately £335,000, with the remaining balance of the total reserves (£750,631) held in Earmarked Reserves.

Council is required to retain a minimum three-month operating/emergency reserve. Based on 2025/26 expenditure of £1,157,337, this equates to £289,334.

After allowing for this requirement, approximately £45,000 remains available above the minimum operating reserve.

RESOLVED: That Option A be approved, and that Folkestone Town Council proceed with the acquisition of 2 Grace Hill, Folkestone, being

the former Library building.

That Council authorises the completion and signing of the transfer documentation as per the Heads of Terms, subject to the satisfactory completion of the legal review. This option acknowledges and accepts the associated risks linked to the condition, future liabilities, and refurbishment requirements of the building.

Following acquisition, Council will:

- i) Work collaboratively with community partners to secure external grant funding to support the refurbishment and future development of the asset.
- ii) Commission and produce a full pre-development cost analysis, including feasibility studies, surveys, design development, planning and statutory approvals, professional consultancy fees, project management and procurement requirements.
- iii) Assess the financial impact on the Council's precept once full pre-development and projected capital costs are known.
- iv) Undertake a formal public consultation on the proposed refurbishment scheme and precept implications before any commitment to proceed with capital works is made.

Proposed: Councillor Tim Prater
Seconded: Councillor Peter Gane
Voting: F: 15, Ag: 0, Ab: 0

Councillor Lucy McGirr moved a vote of thanks to all those involved in the acquisition of the former Library building.

2238. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Annual Statutory Meeting - Tuesday, 5 May 2026 at 7pm
Annual Town Assembly - Tuesday, 12 May 2026 at 7pm

The meeting concluded at 8:07pm.

.....Town Mayor

FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL

APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES SUB-COMMITTEES AND PANELS

2025/26 – 2026/27

Chair (**Bold**)

Vice Chair (*Italics*)

2025/26	2026/27
Community Services Committee	Community, Climate & Environment Committee
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr Roger West 2. <i>Cllr Lucy McGirr</i> 3. Cllr Bridget Chapman 4. Cllr Jane Darling 5. Cllr Peter Gane 6. Cllr Belinda Walker 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr Abena Akuffo-Kelly 2. Cllr Charles Bain Smith 3. Cllr Bridget Chapman 4. Cllr Jane Darling 5. Cllr Laura Davison 6. Cllr Peter Gane 7. Cllr Nicola Keen 8. Cllr Kieran Leigh 9. Cllr Lucy McGirr 10. Cllr John Renshaw 11. Cllr Belinda Walker 12. Cllr Roger West
Climate and Environment Committee	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr John Renshaw 2. <i>Cllr Kieran Leigh</i> 3. Cllr Abena Akuffo-Kelly 4. Cllr Charles Bain Smith 5. Cllr Laura Davison 6. Cllr Nicola Keen 7. Cllr Lucy McGirr 8. Cllr Belinda Walker 9. Cllr Roger West 	
Personnel Sub-Committee	Personnel Sub-Committee
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr Nicola Keen 2. <i>Cllr Peter Gane</i> 3. Cllr Christine Dickinson 4. Cllr Connor McConville 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr Christine Dickinson 2. Cllr Peter Gane 3. Cllr Nicola Keen 4. Cllr Connor McConville

Finance and General Purposes Committee	Finance and General Purposes Committee
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr Connor McConville 2. <i>Cllr Nicola Keen</i> 3. Cllr Abena Akuffo-Kelly 4. Cllr Bridget Chapman 5. Cllr Laura Davison 6. Cllr Christine Dickinson 7. Cllr Peter Gane 8. Cllr Kieran Leigh 9. Cllr Adrian Lockwood 10. Cllr Jackie Meade 11. Cllr Tim Prater 12. Cllr Belinda Walker 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr Abena Akuffo-Kelly 2. Cllr Bridget Chapman 3. Cllr Laura Davison 4. Cllr Christine Dickinson 5. Cllr Peter Gane 6. Cllr Nicola Keen 7. Cllr Kieran Leigh 8. Cllr Adrian Lockwood 9. Cllr Connor McConville 10. Cllr Jackie Meade 11. Cllr Tim Prater 12. Cllr Belinda Walker

Planning Committee	Planning Committee
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr Charles Bain Smith 2. <i>Cllr John Renshaw</i> 3. Cllr Bridget Chapman 4. Cllr Jane Darling 5. Cllr Christine Dickinson 6. Cllr Liz McShane 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr Charles Bain Smith 2. Cllr Bridget Chapman 3. Cllr Jane Darling 4. Cllr Christine Dickinson 5. Cllr Liz McShane 6. Cllr John Renshaw

Citizenship Awards Panel	Citizenship Awards Panel
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Town Mayor 2. Deputy Town Mayor 3. Past Mayor 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Town Mayor 2. Deputy Town Mayor 3. Past Mayor

Grievance Panel	Grievance Panel
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr TBC 2. Cllr TBC 3. Cllr TBC 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr TBC 2. Cllr TBC 3. Cllr TBC

Grants Committee	Grants Committee
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr Lucy McGirr 2. <i>Cllr Belinda Walker</i> 3. Cllr Abena Akuffo-Kelly 4. Cllr Charles Bain Smith 5. Cllr Bridget Chapman 6. Cllr Jane Darling 7. Cllr Laura Davison 8. Cllr Christine Dickinson 9. Cllr Peter Gane 10. Cllr Nicola Keen 11. Cllr Kieran Leigh 12. Cllr Adrian Lockwood 13. Cllr Connor McConville 14. Cllr Liz McShane 15. Cllr Jackie Meade 16. Cllr Tim Prater 17. Cllr John Renshaw 18. Cllr Roger West 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cllr Abena Akuffo-Kelly 2. Cllr Charles Bain Smith 3. Cllr Bridget Chapman 4. Cllr Jane Darling 5. Cllr Laura Davison 6. Cllr Christine Dickinson 7. Cllr Peter Gane 8. Cllr Nicola Keen 9. Cllr Kieran Leigh 10. Cllr Adrian Lockwood 11. Cllr Connor McConville 12. Cllr Liz McShane 13. Cllr Lucy McGirr 14. Cllr Jackie Meade 15. Cllr Tim Prater 16. Cllr John Renshaw 17. Cllr Belinda Walker 18. Cllr Roger West



STANDING ORDERS

This policy was adopted by Folkestone Town Council at its meeting held on: 6 May 2025 –
Minute 2176

GOVERNING BODY: FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL, 1-2 GUILDHALL STREET, FOLKESTONE, CT20 1DY

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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 Mayor/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 Mayor/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 Mayor/Chair of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the Mayor/Chair.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his 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 Mayor/Chair.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k) below, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Mayor/Chair of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Mayor/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 of 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 Mayor/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 he last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. in exercise of a right of reply.
- p During the debate of 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 he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the Mayor/Chair of the meeting and his 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 requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the Mayor/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 his right of reply.

t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r) above, 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 Mayor/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 Mayor/Chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.

b If person(s) disregard the request of the Mayor/Chair of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the Mayor/Chair of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or 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) above is ignored, the Mayor/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 for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice.**

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) above shall not exceed (15) minutes unless directed by the Mayor/Chairman of the meeting.
- g Subject to standing order 3(f) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than (3) minutes.
- h In accordance with standing order 3(e) above, a question shall be in writing, signed and delivered not less than seven clear days (excluding weekends and public holidays) before the meeting to the Town Clerk. The question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Mayor/Chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person shall stand when requesting to speak and when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The Mayor/Chair of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the Mayor/Chair of the meeting.
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the Mayor/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 Mayor of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Deputy Mayor of the Council (if any).



p The Mayor/Chair, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Mayor/Chair is absent from a meeting, the Deputy Mayor/Vice-Chair, if present, shall preside. If both the Mayor/Chair and the Deputy Mayor/Vice-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 or councillors with voting rights present and voting.



r The Mayor/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 he gave an original vote.
See standing orders 5(i) and (j) below for the different rules that apply in the election of the Mayor/Chairman 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 his 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 present and absent;
- iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
- iv. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
- v. if there was a public participation session; and
- vi. 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 his 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/committee are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.
See standing order 4d(viii) below 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 (3) 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 full 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) above, appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;

- v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c) above, 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 Town Clerk/Proper Officer (7) days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
- vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the Chairman of the standing committee;
- vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own Chairman 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 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.

e. The Chair and the vice chair of the council are ex-officio members of all committees and sub-committees. Each committee and sub-committee set its own chair, and they will be the chair of those meetings, not the ex officio members (unless they are elected to do so by that committee) who DO NOT automatically preside. The ex officio members of any committee or subcommittee under this clause shall be voting members of that committee and their attendance will count towards the quorum of that committee or subcommittee.

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 new councillors elected take office.
- b In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a council shall be held on such day in May as the council may direct.
- 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 directs.
- e The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the council shall be the election of the Mayor / Chair and Deputy Mayor / Chair of the Council.

- f The Mayor of the Council, unless they have resigned or becomes 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 Mayor of the Council, if any, unless they resign or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Deputy Mayor of the Council at the next annual meeting of the council.
- h In an election year, if the current Mayor of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the council, they shall preside at the meeting until a successor Mayor of the Council has been elected. The current Mayor of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Mayor of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- i In an election year, if the current Mayor of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the council, they shall preside at the meeting until a new Mayor of the Council has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Mayor of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- j Following the election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council at the annual meeting of the council, the business of the annual meeting shall generally include:
 - i. In an election year, delivery by the Mayor of the Council, Deputy Mayor 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 Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council of his 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 above;
 - ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
 - x. Review of arrangements, including any charters and agency agreements, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities;

- xi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
- xii. 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;
- xiii. Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment;
- xiv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks;
- xv. Review of the council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
- xvi. Review of the council's complaints procedure;
- xvii. Review of the council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Legislation (*see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);
- xviii. Review of the council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
- xix. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;
- xx. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.
- xxi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the full council up to and including the next annual meeting of full council.

6. Extraordinary meetings of the council and committees and sub-committees

- a** The Mayor of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council at any time.
- b** If the Mayor of the Council does not or refuses to 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 must 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 or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within (7) days of having been requested by to do so by (2) members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any (2) members of the committee [and the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee [and 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 (6) councillors to be given to the Town Clerk/Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9 below, 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) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within 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 Mayor/Chair of the meeting.

9. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Town Clerk/Proper Officer

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for 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 Town Clerk 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 Town Clerk/Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Town Clerk/ Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Town Clerk/Proper Officer so that it can be understood at least (5) clear days before the meeting.

- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Town Clerk/Proper Officer shall consult with the Mayor/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 Town Clerk/Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded in a book for that purpose and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded in a book for that purpose with an explanation by the Town Clerk/Proper Officer for their 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 Town Clerk/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 sensitive 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 requirements);
 - xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - xvii. to close a 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

- 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 chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () 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) above.

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- b Unless they have 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 he had the interest.
- c Unless they have 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 Town Clerk 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 Town Clerk/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) above, dispensations requests shall be considered by the Town Clerk/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) above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:
 - 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 or
 - 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

- a Upon notification by the District or County 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 Town Clerk/Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11 above, report this to the council.
- b Where the notification in standing order 14(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Town Clerk/Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Mayor of Council of this fact, and the Mayor shall nominate the Finance Officer to assume the duties of the Town Clerk/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) below.
- c The council may:
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- d Upon notification by the District or County 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. Town Clerk/Proper Officer

- a The Town Clerk/ Proper Officer shall be either (i) the Town Clerk or (ii) the Deputy Clerk when the Town Clerk 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 Town Clerk/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) above for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) above for a meeting of a committee.

- ii. subject to standing order 9 above, 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 full council for the election of a new Mayor of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his 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. retain acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act legislation and rights exercisable under the General Data Protection Regulations, in accordance with the council's policies and procedures;
- ix. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- x. 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);
- xi. arrange for legal deeds to be executed; *See also standing order 23 below.*
- xii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the council in accordance with the council's financial regulations;
- xiii. record every planning application notified to the council and the council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;

- xiv. refer a planning application received by the council to the Chairman or in his absence the Vice-Chairman of the Planning 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 planning committee;
- xv. manage access to information about the council via the publication scheme; and
- xvi. retain custody of the seal of the council which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect. *See also standing order 22 below.*

16. Responsible Financial Officer

- a The Finance Officer shall 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 (England).
- 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 the Finance & General Purposes Committee a statement to summarise:
 - i. the council’s payments made during the period being reported;
 - ii. the council’s aggregate receipts and payments for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the period being reported.

and which 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 the Finance & General Purposes Committee with a statement to summarise:
 - i. the council’s payments during the period being reported;
 - ii. the council’s aggregate receipts and payments for the year;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of year; and
 - iv. the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual 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 applying the form of accounts determined by the council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March. The completed annual return of the council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Finance & General Purposes Committee 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 **£25,000** 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.
- c. A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 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).
- d. 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;
- iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
 - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Town Clerk/Proper Officer;
 - v. tenders shall be opened by the Town Clerk/Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- e. 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.

19. Handling staff matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of council or (personnel) sub-committee is subject to standing order 11 above.
- 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 (personnel) sub-committee or, if he is not available, the Vice-Chair of the (personnel) sub-committee] of absence occasioned by illness or other reason at its next meeting.
- c Any two members of the Personnel Sub-committee shall upon a resolution conduct an annual appraisal of the Town Clerk, the appraisal shall be reported in writing.
- d Following an appraisal of the Town Clerk the councillors involved shall simply report back to Full Council that an appraisal has been carried out and not refer to any other items raised.
- e Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the

council's most senior employee shall contact the Chair of the (personnel) sub-committee or in his absence, the Vice-Chair in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the (personnel) sub-committee.

- f Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Town Clerk relates to the Mayor or any Councillor, this shall be communicated to a member of the (Grievance Panel), which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the (Grievance Panel).
- g Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters as strictly confidential and secure.
- h 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. Requests for 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 (xvii) above.

- 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) above, the council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Town Clerk/Proper Officer in the presence of two councillors who shall counter sign the deed as witnesses.

24. Communicating with District and County or Unitary councillors

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

25. Restrictions on councillor activities

- a. Unless authorised by a resolution, 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 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 requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least (12) councillors to be given to the Town Clerk/Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9 above.
- c The Town Clerk/Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible after he has delivered his acceptance of office form.
- d The decision of the Mayor/Chair of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.



FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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<i>Date Adopted</i>	6 May 2025 (FC Min.2176)	<i>Review Date</i>	May 2026
<i>Revised Dates</i>			

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 Town Clerk has been appointed as RFO and these regulations apply accordingly. The RFO;
 - acts under the policy direction of the council;
 - administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and proper practices;
 - determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and 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**

1.7. In addition, the council shall:

- determine and regularly review the bank mandate for all council bank accounts;

2. Risk management and internal control

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

1.9. The Clerk with the Finance Officer shall prepare, for approval by the council, a risk management policy covering all activities of the council. This policy and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

1.10. When considering any new activity, the Clerk with the Finance Officer shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration by the council.

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

1.12. **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.**

1.13. At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair or a bank signatory shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the Finance Officer. The member shall sign and date the

reconciliations as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council Finance and General Purposes Committee.

- 1.14. 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

- 1.15. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 1.16. **The accounting records determined by the RFO must be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable 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;**
- 1.17. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- 1.18. The RFO shall complete and certify 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.
- 1.19. **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.**
- 1.20. **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.
- 1.21. The internal auditor shall be appointed by the Finance and General Purposes 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.
- 1.22. 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

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

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

1.24. 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.

1.25. 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.

4. Budget and precept

1.26. **Before setting a precept, the council must calculate its council tax (England) budget requirement for each financial year by preparing and approving a budget, in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation.**

1.27. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the Personnel Committee at least annually in February for the following financial year and the final version shall be evidenced by a hard copy schedule signed by the Clerk and the Chair of the Council or relevant committee.

1.28. No later than November each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all income and expenditure for the following financial year

1.29. Each committee (if any) shall review its draft budget and submit any proposed amendments to the Finance and General Purposes Committee no later than the end of November each year.

1.30. The draft budget with any committee proposals, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and a recommendation made to the council.

1.31. Having considered the proposed budget, the council shall determine its council tax (England) requirement by setting a budget. The council shall set a precept for this amount no later than the end of January for the ensuing financial year.

- 1.32. **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.**
- 1.33. 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.
- 1.34. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.

5. Procurement

- 1.35. **Members and officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times.** Any officer procuring goods, services or works should ensure, as far as practicable, that the best available terms are obtained, usually by obtaining prices from at least three suppliers.
- 1.36. Every contract shall comply with these the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 1.37. **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.**
- 1.38. Where the estimated value is below the Government threshold, the council shall (with the exception of items listed in paragraph 5.10) obtain prices as follows:
- 1.39. For contracts estimated to exceed £60,000 including VAT, the Clerk shall seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the Finance and General Purposes Committee 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.
- 1.40. **For contracts estimated to be over £30,000 including VAT, the council must comply with any requirements of the Legislation regarding the publication of invitations and notices.**
- 1.41. Where the value is between £1,000 and £3,000 excluding VAT, the Clerk shall try to obtain 3 estimates which might include evidence of online prices, or recent prices from regular suppliers.
- 1.42. Where the value is between £3,001 and £25,000, the Clerk shall try to obtain 3 quotes from suppliers.
- 1.43. For smaller purchases, the clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 1.44. **Contracts must not be split to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 1.45. The requirement to obtain competitive prices in these regulations need not apply to contracts that relate to items (i) to (iv) below:

- i. specialist services, such as legal professionals acting in disputes;
 - ii. repairs to, or parts for, existing machinery or equipment;
 - iii. works, goods or services that constitute an extension of an existing contract;
 - iv. goods or services that are only available from one supplier or are sold at a fixed price.
- 1.46. 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 or to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.
- 1.47. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- 1.48. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:
- the Clerk, under delegated authority, for any items below £3,000 excluding VAT.
 - the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council or Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee for any items above £3,000 and below £10,000 excluding VAT.
 - Finance and General Purposes Committee or council for all items of expenditure within their delegated budgets for items above £10,000 excluding VAT.
 - In respect of grants, a duly authorised committee within any limits set by council and in accordance with any policy statement agreed by the council.
- 1.49. 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.
- 1.50. In cases of serious risk to the delivery of council services or to public safety on council premises, the clerk may authorise expenditure of up to £10,000 excluding VAT on repair, replacement or other work that in their judgement is necessary, whether or not there is any budget for such expenditure. The Clerk shall report such action to the Chair as soon as possible and to the council or relevant committee as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 1.51. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless the council or relevant committee is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.
- 1.52. Copies of orders shall be retained.

6. Banking and payments

- 1.53. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO or Finance Officer and authorised by the council; banking arrangements

shall not be delegated to a committee. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.

- 1.54. 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.
- 1.55. All invoices for payment should be examined for arithmetical accuracy, analysed to the appropriate expenditure heading and verified to confirm that the work, goods or services were received, checked by the RFO. Where the certification of invoices is done as a batch, this shall include a statement by the RFO that all invoices listed have been 'examined, verified and certified' by the RFO.
- 1.56. 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.
- 1.57. All payments shall be made by online banking or cheque
- 1.58. The Clerk and Finance Officer shall have delegated authority to authorise payments in the following circumstances:
 - i. any payments of up to £3,000 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
 - ii. payments of up to £10,000 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 council, where the Clerk and Finance Officer certify that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council or Finance and General Purposes Committee.

7. Electronic payments

- 1.59. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO and Finance Officer shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify a number of 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. The Clerk may be an authorised signatory, but no signatory should be involved in approving any payment to themselves.
- 1.60. 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.
- 1.61. Two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.

- 1.62. Evidence shall be retained showing which members approved the payment online and a printout of the transaction confirming that the payment has been made shall be appended to the invoice for audit purposes.
- 1.63. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next Finance and General Purposes meeting.
- 1.64. 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.
- 1.65. Remembered password facilities other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. Cheque payments

- 1.66. Cheques or orders for payment in accordance with a resolution or delegated decision shall be signed by two bank signatories.
- 1.67. 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.
- 1.68. 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 invoice.

9. Payment cards

- 1.69. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and the Finance Officer will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £1,000.
- 1.70. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by the RFO.
- 1.71. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk and Finance Officer and any balance shall be paid in full each month.

10. Petty Cash

- 1.72. The RFO can maintain a petty cash float/impress account of up to £300 and may provide petty cash to officers 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.

11. Payment of salaries and allowances

- 1.73. As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**
- 1.74. Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**
- 1.75. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or by the Personnel Sub-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 council or by the Personnel Sub-Committee.
- 1.76. 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.
- 1.77. 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.
- 1.78. Each 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.
- 1.79. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council or to the Personnel Sub-Committee, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council or by the Personnel Sub-Committee.
- 1.80. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

12. Loans and investments

- 1.81. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council or Finance and General Purposes and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.
- 1.82. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the full council or by the Finance and General Purposes, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.
- 1.83. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must

written be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

- 1.84. All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.
- 1.85. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.
- 1.86. 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 regulations.

13. Income

- 1.87. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO or Finance Officer.
- 1.88. Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the council by the RFO and shall be written off in the year. The council's approval shall be shown in the accounting records.
- 1.89. 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.
- 1.90. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.
- 1.91. The RFO shall ensure that VAT is correctly recorded in the council's accounting software and that any VAT Return required is submitted from the software by the due date.
- 1.92. 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.

14. Payments under contracts for building or other construction works

- 1.93. 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 works.
- 1.94. Any variation of, addition to or omission from a contract must be authorised by the Clerk to the contractor in writing, with the council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the contract sum by 5% or more, or likely to exceed the budget available.

15. Stores and equipment

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

16. Assets, properties and estates

- 1.99. The Clerk shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.
- 1.100. 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.
- 1.101. The continued existence of tangible assets shown in the Register shall be verified at least annually, possibly in conjunction with a health and safety inspection of assets.
- 1.102. No interest 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).
- 1.103. No tangible moveable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the council, together with any other consents required by law, except where the estimated value of any one item does not exceed £1,000. In each case a written report shall be provided to council or Finance and General Purposes with a full business case.

17. Insurance

- 1.104. The RFO 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.

- 1.105. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the Finance Officer of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 1.106. 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 General Purposes at the next available meeting. The Finance Officer shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers in consultation with the Clerk.
- 1.107. 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.

18. Charities

- 1.108. Where the council is sole managing trustee of a charitable body the Clerk and RFO shall ensure that separate accounts are kept of the funds held on charitable trusts and separate financial reports made in such form as shall be appropriate, in accordance with Charity Law and legislation, or as determined by the Charity Commission. The Clerk and 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

- 1.109. The council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of Clerk or Finance Officer. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.
- 1.110. The council may, by resolution 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. Suspension does not disapply any legislation or permit the council to act unlawfully.
- 1.111. 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 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.

FOLKESTONE TOWN COUNCIL
SCHEDULE OF MEETING DATES 2026/27

(Please note that all meeting dates are provisional and may be subject to change or cancellation)

	Planning Committee 19.00 (Thursday)	Community, Climate & Env. Committee 19.00 (Tuesday)	Finance & General Purposes Committee 19.00 (Thursday)	Grants Committee	Personnel Sub- Committee 18.00 (Thursday)	Full Council 19.00
April 2026	23	7 (C&E) 14 (CS)	16		16	
May 2026	14					Tuesday 5 (Annual Council) Tuesday 12 (Town Assembly)
June 2026	4 and 25	9	11			11 (AGAR) (18:00)
July 2026	16					
August 2026	6 and 27	18	20		20	
September 2026	10 and 24			3		17
October 2026	15	13	22			
November 2026	5 and 26					12
December 2026	TUES 15	8	10			
January 2027	7 and 28					14
February 2027	18	9	11	4	11	
March 2027	4 and 25					11
April 2027	8 and 29	13	15		15	
May 2027	20					Tuesday 18 (Annual Council) Tuesday 25 (Town Assembly)

N.B. ELECTIONS SCEHDULED 6 MAY 2027 - TBC