

**TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL**

**BUDGET & POLICY COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MAY 2022**

**COUNCIL FINANCIAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Council has a range of documents which govern its administrative, procedural, financial and other arrangements.
- 1.2 This report relates to various of those which are of a financial nature and provides the opportunity, inter alia, to both review fitness for purpose and any administrative/consequential amendments, as appropriate.
- 1.3 To that end the report sets out, in brief, a commentary on the changes which are being proposed and if/as incorporated in the respective attachments. Each of these, together with certain related provisions, is required to be reviewed periodically by the Council (normally at the time of the Annual Meeting). This report is in discharge of that obligation. Because there have been no material changes in NALC recommended practice, or audit recommendations, no significant changes are proposed.

**2. COUNCIL DOCUMENTS**

2.1 **Tavistock Town Council Financial Regulations** (Appendix 1) – the document circulated is substantially unchanged from that adopted in 2019. At that time a full review was undertaken to accord with the then (and still) current updated contents as recommended by the National Association of Local Councils. Such changes as have now been made in the Appendix relate primarily to matters of an administrative or clarifying nature:

- a) Changing references to the Works Administrator to Community & Compliance Officer to conform to the current establishment;
- b) Clarification that the delegation to the General Manager in the 4<sup>th</sup> bullet point of section 4.1 is in connection with revenue spend;

- c) The amendment of section 9.4 to read 'any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the Council and shall be *considered whether to be* written off in the year'. This is to afford flexibility to the Council to retain the option to try and recover at a future date.
- d) The addition at the end of para 10.5 of the words '*where the General power of Competence does not apply*' to reflect the altered scope that facility allows.

RECOMMENDATION – Council be invited to adopt the submitted document.

**2.2 Other Periodic Reviews** – it is timely, as part of the foregoing and associated requirements, to discharge other periodic obligations, namely:

RECOMMENDATION – Council be invited to:

- a) Section 5.10 – Note the List of Existing Suppliers (Appendix i refers) – for information;
- b) Section 6.6 – Approve the continuation of use of a variable Direct Debit for utility and equivalent services;
- c) Section 6.7 – Approve the facility for use of a Bankers Standing Order principally for the payment of salaries if required (this is a model standing order - please note currently such payments are made by BACS);
- d) Section 6.8 – Approve the use of BACS or CHAPS for appropriate payments.

**2.3 Tavistock Town Council System of Internal Control** (Appendix 2) – this is a document the Council undertakes to review regularly, no material changes are recommended.

RECOMMENDATION – Council be invited to adopt the submitted document.

**2.4 Tavistock Town Council Treasury & Investment Policy**

(Appendix 3) – this is a document the Council undertakes to review regularly (as part of the Treasury Management Policy within its Financial Regulations). It is therefore typically reviewed alongside Financial Regulations. The changes agreed previously were in conformity with the recommendations of your Internal Auditor to

reflect the necessary balance between funds held and the risk of bank failure. Consequently no changes are recommended.

RECOMMENDATION – Council be invited to adopt the submitted document.

**2.5 Tavistock Town Council Members Scheme of Basic Allowance and the Travelling and Subsistence Allowance Scheme**  
(Appendices 4-5) – no amendments are proposed\*.

RECOMMENDATION – Council be invited to adopt the submitted documents.

\*However, please note at a recent Meeting the possibility of a facility for Members to be invited to forego payments if a certain threshold of attendance at Meetings was not reached was mooted.

**2.6 Tavistock Town Council Pension Discretions Policy** (Appendix 6) – no changes are proposed to this document, it is brought back for periodic consideration and review. The Committee will note that the approach of the Council, where discretions are potentially available, is typically to reserve that matter to itself for consideration on a case by case basis as/when circumstances arise.

RECOMMENDATION – Council be invited to adopt the submitted document.

**3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 It is recommended that, subject to the comments of the Committee & Council, the recommendations as identified above, together with any consequential administrative amendments, be endorsed and the revised documents/arrangements come into effect from 24<sup>th</sup> May, 2022.

Carl Hearn

**TOWN CLERK**

Tavistock Town Council