

SCHEME OF DELEGATION



**This Scheme of Delegation was adopted by
Upton & North Elmsall Parish Council.**

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1. DISCHARGE OF THE SCHEME

1.1 The Parish Clerk is designated and authorised to act as the Proper Officer for the purposes of the Local Government Act 1972 and any other statute requiring the designation of a Proper Officer.

1.2 This Scheme of Delegation forms part of the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and shall be reviewed annually, or earlier where required, including where there are staffing, structural or governance changes.

1.3 Those with delegated responsibility are referred to by job title, including the Parish Clerk, Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer.

1.4 The purpose of this Scheme is to clearly define the parameters within which Officers of the Council, Committees and any other delegated bodies may act without further reference to the Council, except where consultation, reporting or Council approval is required.

1.5 Where consultation with others is required before delegated authority may be exercised, this Scheme will specify with whom that consultation should take place.

1.6 Any deviation from this Scheme shall be reported to the Council at the earliest opportunity, with an explanation of the circumstances in which the deviation occurred.

1.7 This Scheme also records the powers delegated by the Council to its Committees and incorporates the Terms of Reference for those Committees.

1.8 Delegated authority must always be exercised in accordance with the law, the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, adopted policies, approved budgets and any specific resolution of the Council.

2. PRINCIPLES OF DELEGATION

2.1 Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that a Council may arrange for the discharge of its functions by a Committee, sub-Committee or Officer of the authority, subject to any statutory restrictions.

2.2 A Committee may arrange for the discharge of any of its delegated functions by a sub-Committee or Officer, unless the Council directs otherwise.

2.3 The delegation of a power does not prevent the Council, or the body that delegated the power, from exercising that power itself.

2.4 The Council's functions in relation to issuing a precept and borrowing money may only be discharged by the full Council.

2.5 Any delegation to a Committee, sub-Committee or Officer shall be exercised in compliance with the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, adopted policies, the approved budget, any conditions imposed by the Council and the law.

2.6 In an emergency, and subject to the reserved powers set out in this Scheme, the Parish Clerk is empowered to carry out such functions of the Council as are necessary to protect the interests, assets, services, staff or reputation of the Council.

2.7 Where the Parish Clerk is contemplating action under delegated powers which is likely to have a significant impact, create significant risk, or affect an area of Council policy, the Parish Clerk shall, where practicable, consult the Chair of the Council and obtain appropriate legal, financial, health and safety, employment or other specialist advice before action is taken.

2.8 Officers may decide not to exercise delegated authority and may instead refer a matter to the Council or relevant Committee for decision.

3. AUTHORITY TO ACT

3.1 It will be appropriate for the Parish Clerk to refer a matter to the Council where the determination of the matter is likely to be particularly controversial, raises matters of policy which should properly be determined by councillors, exceeds delegated authority, or could by its scale, complexity or risk expose the Council to significant corporate, financial, legal or reputational risk.

3.2 The Parish Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer and Committees have responsibility to act within the Council's approved policies, procedures, budgetary framework and legal powers, in conjunction with this Scheme.

3.3 Any matter which falls outside the terms of this Scheme, or where there is uncertainty as to whether delegated authority exists, shall be referred to the Council or the appropriate Committee for decision.

3.4 A delegated power does not have to be exercised. Where it is considered more appropriate, the delegated body or Officer may refer the matter to the Council or relevant Committee.

4. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

4.1 Under section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972, Officers must make a formal declaration where they have a financial interest in any Council contract.

4.2 Every Officer is responsible for identifying and declaring any actual or potential personal, financial, business or other interest, or close personal relationship, which may reasonably be perceived as giving rise to a conflict of interest in any matter under consideration by the Council.

4.3 Where the Parish Clerk has a conflict of interest in any matter, they shall not participate in that matter in their capacity as an Officer unless approved by the Council, and the approval is formally recorded in the Council minutes.

4.4 Where another Officer has a conflict of interest in any matter, they shall notify the Parish Clerk as soon as possible. The Parish Clerk shall determine what action is required and shall ensure that appropriate records are kept.

4.5 Where an Officer is unsure whether an interest should be declared, they should seek advice from the Parish Clerk in the first instance. Where the matter relates to the Parish Clerk, advice should be sought from the Chair of the Council or appropriate external adviser.

5. COUNCIL RESERVED POWERS

5.1 The following matters are reserved to the full Council and may not be delegated to a Committee or Officer, except where permitted by law:

- Appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council.
- Appointment of the Parish Clerk, Responsible Financial Officer and other Council Officers, following a recommendation from the Employment & Staffing Committee where applicable.
- Adoption, amendment and review of Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, this Scheme of Delegation and other Council policies.
- Approval and adoption of the Council's policy framework.
- Approval and adoption of the annual budget.
- Setting the precept.
- Approval of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and any statutory annual return.
- Consideration of any report from the internal or external auditor requiring Council attention.
- Approval of borrowing.
- Making, amending or revoking byelaws.
- Confirming eligibility for the General Power of Competence.
- Agreeing and amending the Terms of Reference for Committees.
- Appointing members to Committees and filling any vacancies on Committees.
- Adoption of the schedule of meetings for the ensuing year.
- Determining matters involving expenditure for which budget provision is not made, or where the approved budget would be exceeded, unless the matter falls within an approved emergency or urgency delegation.
- Determining matters which do not fall within the remit of any Committee or existing delegation.
- Any matter which, by law, must be considered by the full Council.

6. DELEGATION TO COMMITTEES - SAFEGUARDS

6.1 The Council may, at any time and without prejudice to executive action already taken, revoke any executive power delegated to a Committee, sub-Committee or Officer.

6.2 Committees may only exercise delegated authority within their approved Terms of Reference, the approved budget, the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, adopted policies and the law.

6.3 Committees may decide not to exercise delegated authority and may instead make a recommendation to the full Council.

6.4 Where a Committee has no delegated authority to make a decision, it may make a recommendation to the full Council.

6.5 Working groups, liaison groups or informal groups shall have no delegated decision-making powers unless expressly resolved by the Council and permitted by law. Their role shall be advisory only.

6.6 Where a Committee decision is made under delegated authority, the minutes should record the decision as a resolution of the Committee.

6.7 Where a Committee makes a recommendation to the Council, the minutes should clearly record the matter as a recommendation and the item shall be referred to the next appropriate Council meeting for decision.

7. DELEGATION TO COMMITTEES

7.1 Employment & Staffing Committee

Purpose of the Committee

The Employment & Staffing Committee is established to provide oversight, scrutiny and assurance in relation to the Council's employment, staffing and workforce governance arrangements. The Committee supports the Council in meeting its responsibilities as an employer and ensures that staffing matters are managed lawfully, fairly, consistently and in accordance with Council policies, employment legislation and good practice.

The Committee oversees employment matters relating to all Council employees, while recognising that the Parish Clerk is responsible for the day-to-day management of staff and the operational delivery of Council services.

Membership

- The Committee shall comprise five (5) Councillors, appointed annually by the Full Council.
- Membership shall be appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Council.
- The Committee shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from among its members at its first meeting following the Annual Meeting of the Council.
- In the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair at any subsequent meeting, the Committee shall appoint a Chair for that meeting only.
- Non-Councillors are not permitted to sit on this Committee.
- No Councillor who is related to any member of staff shall be appointed to the Committee.
- Members of the Committee who have been involved in a staffing matter at an earlier stage shall not sit on any appeal panel relating to that matter.

Quorum

The quorum shall be three (3) members. No business shall be transacted unless a quorum is present.

Frequency of Meetings

The Committee shall meet at least quarterly and more frequently where required to fulfil its duties.

Role and Responsibilities

The Employment & Staffing Committee shall:

- Oversee the Council's employment arrangements and provide assurance to Full Council that staffing matters are being managed lawfully, fairly and effectively.
- Review staffing structures, staffing levels, job descriptions, person specifications and terms and conditions of employment, and make recommendations to Full Council where required.
- Review contracts of employment and employment policies, including the Employee Handbook and any stand-alone employment policies, and make recommendations to Full Council for adoption where appropriate.
- Oversee compliance with employment law, health and safety law, relevant terms and conditions of service, the National Joint Council Green Book and relevant guidance from NALC and SLCC.
- Oversee staff wellbeing, workload and general employment arrangements, while recognising that the Clerk is responsible for day-to-day management of staff.
- Appoint a nominated Councillor to act as a liaison contact for the Parish Clerk in relation to the Clerk's wellbeing, planned leave, short-notice absence reporting arrangements and appraisal.
- Receive reports from the nominated Councillor where a matter requires consideration or decision by the Committee.
- Ensure that the Parish Clerk has appropriate support and that workload issues are considered where they may affect staff wellbeing, governance, service delivery or legal compliance.
- Oversee the Council's staff appraisal arrangements, with the Parish Clerk responsible for carrying out appraisals for staff under their management, and the Committee responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are in place for the Parish Clerk's appraisal.
- Oversee the Council's general approach to staff training and continuing professional development, with the Parish Clerk responsible for identifying and authorising routine training for staff in accordance with Council policy, service requirements and the approved training budget.
- Consider training matters where they relate to the Parish Clerk, exceed approved budgets, require a policy decision, or are referred to the Committee by the Parish Clerk.
- Review payroll administration and payroll service provision, with routine payroll matters managed by the Parish Clerk/RFO and payroll provider.
- Review staff pension arrangements and make recommendations to Full Council where any proposed change has material financial, contractual, budgetary or policy implications.
- Consider and implement nationally agreed pay awards, contractual increments and other pay-related matters where these fall within approved Council policy and budget.
- Monitor and address regular, sustained or concerning staff absence in accordance with Council policy.
- Consider any staffing matter referred to the Committee by the Council or the Parish Clerk.
- Ensure that the Council complies with legislative requirements relating to the employment of staff.

Recruitment and Appointment

The Employment & Staffing Committee shall:

- Oversee recruitment processes for permanent and temporary staff posts.
- Agree recruitment packs, including job adverts, job descriptions, person specifications and application forms.
- Shortlist candidates and agree interview arrangements.
- Appoint a recruitment panel from its membership where required.
- Agree interview procedures, scoring criteria and assessment documents to support fair and consistent recruitment decisions.
- Interview candidates and identify a preferred candidate.
- Make recommendations to Full Council in respect of appointments to all staff posts.
- Ensure that references, eligibility checks and other appropriate pre-employment checks are completed before employment commences.
- Ensure that a written statement of particulars or contract of employment is provided on or before the first day of employment.

Discipline, Grievance, Capability and Appeals

The Employment & Staffing Committee shall:

- Administer the Council's disciplinary, grievance, capability, sickness absence and appeal procedures in accordance with the Council's adopted policies.
- Establish panels for disciplinary, grievance, capability or appeal matters where required.
- Ensure that members appointed to any panel have not had prior involvement in the matter under consideration.
- Oversee any process that may lead to dismissal, redundancy or other significant staffing outcome, in accordance with Council policy and employment law.
- Refer matters to Full Council where required by law, Council policy or where the Committee does not have delegated authority to make a final decision.

Health and Safety

The Employment & Staffing Committee shall:

- Oversee health and safety matters relating specifically to Council employees and contractors.
- Review staff-related health and safety arrangements, including training, risk assessments and safe working arrangements.
- Be responsible for the procurement and review of professional employment and health and safety support services, subject to budget provision and the Council's Financial Regulations.
- Authorise additional employment or health and safety support where necessary to assist with employment-related matters, subject to budget provision and the Council's Financial Regulations.

Financial Delegation

The Committee shall:

- Be responsible for any staffing budgets delegated by Full Council in accordance with the approved Council budget.
- Review salary and wages budgets, including employer contributions and on-costs, at

least annually as part of the budget-setting process.

- Authorise expenditure within its delegated budget and Terms of Reference, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- Receive staffing budget reports for monitoring purposes and ensure that the Committee does not exceed its overall delegated budget.
- Submit staffing budget requirements and recommendations as part of the Council's budget-setting process.

Reporting

- The Committee shall report its findings, observations and recommendations to Full Council through minutes and reports.
- The Committee does not make final decisions on the appointment of the Parish Clerk and/or Responsible Financial Officer, changes to the Council's approved staffing establishment where Full Council approval is required, or any matter reserved to Full Council by law, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations or this Scheme of Delegation.
- Minutes of the Committee shall be approved by the Committee and reported to the next appropriate meeting of Full Council.
- Confidential staffing information shall be recorded, reported and published only where appropriate and in accordance with data protection requirements, employment law and the Council's publication arrangements.

Sub-Committees and Panels

The Committee may establish sub-committees, working groups or panels where required. Any such sub-committee, working group or panel:

- Shall operate within terms of reference or instructions approved by the Committee.
- May not exceed the responsibilities or authority delegated to the Committee.
- Shall report back to the Committee, unless otherwise directed by Full Council.
- Shall comprise members who are not conflicted and have not had prior involvement in the matter where the panel relates to a grievance, disciplinary, capability or appeal process.

Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually by Full Council at the Annual Meeting, or earlier if required.

7.2 Finance Committee

Purpose of the Committee

The Finance Committee is established to provide oversight, scrutiny and assurance in relation to the Council's financial management and governance. The Committee supports sound financial administration, risk management and internal control, ensuring that the Council's financial systems and processes remain robust, transparent and compliant.

Membership

- The Committee shall comprise five (5) Councillors, appointed annually by the Full Council.
- Membership shall be appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Council.
- The Committee shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from among its members at its first meeting following the Annual Meeting of the Council.
- In the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair at any subsequent meeting, the Committee shall appoint a Chair for that meeting only.
- Non-Councillors are not permitted to sit on this Committee as it regulates the finances of the Council.

Quorum

The quorum shall be three (3) members. No business shall be transacted unless a quorum is present.

Frequency of Meetings

The Committee shall meet at least quarterly and more frequently where required to fulfil its duties.

Role and Responsibilities

The Finance Committee shall:

- Receive and scrutinise financial reports including income and expenditure, bank reconciliations, VAT position and budget monitoring information.
- Review the effectiveness of financial controls, accounting procedures and financial risk management.
- Review arrangements for banking, internal controls, online banking and payment authorisation systems to ensure they remain secure and effective.
- Review insurance cover, fidelity guarantee and risk exposure, and make recommendations to Full Council where appropriate.
- Review and monitor the Council's Risk Register insofar as it relates to financial and operational risk, and recommend amendments to Full Council.
- Review reports and recommendations arising from internal and external audit and monitor progress against any agreed actions.
- Review ongoing contracts, subscriptions and service level agreements to ensure continued value for money, and make recommendations to Full Council regarding their renewal, amendment, or termination.
- Periodically review the Council's financial policies, including Financial Regulations, procurement procedures and reserves policies, and make recommendations to Full

Council for any required updates.

- Provide assurance to the Full Council that financial administration, governance and internal control systems are operating effectively.

Audit and Governance

The Committee shall:

- Consider the internal audit report and monitor the implementation of agreed actions.
- Review the effectiveness of internal control arrangements prior to the Council's approval of the Annual Governance Statement.
- Provide assurance to Full Council regarding financial governance and compliance with proper practices.

Reporting

- The Committee shall report its findings, observations and recommendations to Full Council through minutes and reports.
- The Committee does not make final decisions on the Council's budget, precept, allocation of reserves or grant awards, which remain the responsibility of the Full Council.

Sub-Committees

The Committee may establish sub-committees or working groups where required. Any such sub-committee or working group:

- Shall consist of no more than three members of the Finance Committee.
- Shall operate within terms of reference approved by the Finance Committee.
- May not exceed the responsibilities or authority delegated to the Finance Committee.

Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually by Full Council at the Annual Meeting, or earlier if required.

7.3 Allotments Committee

Purpose of the Committee

The Allotments Committee is established to provide oversight, scrutiny and assurance in relation to the management, maintenance, use and development of the Council's allotments, stables and grazing field, Eco Plot and associated growing spaces.

The Committee supports the effective, safe and lawful management of these sites and works with allotment and stable tenants, authorised site representatives, community partners and Officers to ensure that the sites are well managed, cost-effective and operated in accordance with Council policies, tenancy agreements, health and safety requirements and good practice.

Membership

- The Committee shall comprise five (5) Councillors, appointed annually by the Full Council.
- Membership shall be appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Council.
- The Committee shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from among its Councillor members at its first meeting following the Annual Meeting of the Council.
- In the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair at any subsequent meeting, the Committee shall appoint a Chair for that meeting only.
- Up to five allotment holder representatives from Harewood Lane allotment site, up to two allotment holder representatives from School Street allotment site, and up to two stable/grazing field representatives may be invited to attend meetings in an advisory, non-voting capacity.
- Other non-voting participants, including representatives of relevant community groups, partner organisations or specialist advisers, may be invited to attend where appropriate.
- Non-Councillor representatives and invited participants shall not have voting rights and shall not count towards the quorum.

Quorum

The quorum shall be three (3) Councillor members. No business shall be transacted unless a quorum is present.

Frequency of Meetings

The Committee shall meet at least quarterly and more frequently where required to fulfil its duties.

Role and Responsibilities

The Allotments Committee shall:

- Oversee the management, use, maintenance and improvement of the Council's allotments, stables and grazing field, Eco Plot and associated growing spaces.
- Consider and make decisions on matters relating to the detailed operation and management of the sites, except where matters are reserved to Full Council.
- Work with tenants, authorised representatives and community partners to support well-managed, safe and cost-effective provision.

- Review tenancy agreements, rules, regulations, procedures and associated policy documents, and make recommendations to Full Council where changes are required.
- Recommend rent levels and any other site-wide charges to Full Council for approval.
- Oversee site inspections and ensure that appropriate action is taken where tenancy agreements, policies, procedures or site rules are not being followed.
- Oversee the issuing of improvement notices, warning letters, tenancy enforcement action and, where appropriate, eviction processes, in accordance with Council policy and legal requirements.
- Receive reports from Officers relating to the management, maintenance, condition and use of the sites.
- Consider annual repairs, maintenance and improvement programmes for the sites.
- Consider and implement agreed improvement plans, using approved budgets, ring-fenced income, earmarked reserves or grant funding where authorised.
- Oversee approved works being carried out on the allotments, stables and grazing field, Eco Plot and associated areas.
- Consider methods of improving accessibility, safety, security, signage, environmental management and tenant communication across the sites.
- Oversee appropriate community growing initiatives, competitions and activities, including children's sunflower competitions and produce-growing competitions, where budget provision exists.
- Oversee the use of the Eco Plot by authorised community groups or projects, ensuring that appropriate permissions, insurance, safeguarding arrangements, risk assessments and operating conditions are in place.

Health, Safety and Compliance

The Committee shall:

- Oversee health, safety and compliance arrangements for the allotments, stables and grazing field, Eco Plot and associated growing spaces.
- Review site risk assessments and any relevant fire risk assessments or safety documentation.
- Monitor site access, security, signage, boundaries, gates, paths and any identified site hazards.
- Receive reports on accidents, incidents, near misses, unauthorised access or significant health and safety concerns relating to the sites.
- Recommend or approve appropriate remedial action where required, subject to delegated authority, budget provision and the Council's Financial Regulations.
- Ensure that matters creating significant legal, financial, environmental, safeguarding, health and safety or reputational risk are referred to Full Council unless urgent action is required under the Parish Clerk's delegated powers.

Financial Delegation

The Committee shall:

- Be responsible for any budgets delegated by Full Council in accordance with the approved Council budget.
- Authorise expenditure within its delegated budget and Terms of Reference, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

- Approve quotes for works, repairs and maintenance relating to the allotments, stables and grazing field, Eco Plot and associated areas provided that budget provision exists and the expenditure complies with Financial Regulations.
- Incur expenditure on routine and repetitive items which have already been included within the approved budget or are the subject of a previous Council resolution, in accordance with Financial Regulations.
- Approve expenditure for summer and winter flower displays within the allocated budget.
- Approve expenditure for authorised growing competitions, community growing activities and associated materials within the allocated budget.
- Purchase whiskey barrels from the allocated Committee budget where budget provision exists.
- Identify potential grant funding opportunities and make recommendations to Full Council regarding suitable applications.
- Consider donations and contributions to jointly funded projects where these fall within the Committee's remit and make recommendations to Full Council where required.
- Receive budget monitoring information for the Committee's areas of responsibility and ensure that the Committee does not exceed its overall delegated budget.
- Keep appropriate records of spending authorised by the Committee and ensure that expenditure is reported through the Council's normal financial reporting arrangements.
- Submit budget requirements and recommendations as part of the Council's budget-setting process.

Matters Reserved to Full Council

The Committee shall not make final decisions on:

- Major improvements or redevelopment projects.
- Changes to services affecting all tenants.
- Matters requiring expenditure above the Committee's delegated authority.
- Any use of earmarked reserves not already approved by Full Council.
- Situations where a dispute between the Committee and a tenant, user or community partner has not been resolved by the Committee.
- Any matter which falls outside the Committee's Terms of Reference or is reserved to Full Council by law, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations or this Scheme of Delegation.

Reporting

- The Committee shall report its findings, observations and recommendations to Full Council through minutes and reports.
- Minutes of the Committee shall be approved by the Committee and reported to the next appropriate meeting of Full Council.
- Any remaining Committee budget at the end of the financial year shall not be carried forward unless expressly approved by Full Council.
- If the Committee requires additional funds during the financial year, it shall make a recommendation to Full Council with a breakdown of the additional funding required.

Sub-Committees and Working Groups

- The Committee may establish sub-committees or working groups where required. Any such sub-committee or working group:
- Shall consist of members appointed by the Committee.
- Shall operate within terms of reference approved by the Committee.
- May not exceed the responsibilities or authority delegated to the Committee.
- Shall report back to the Committee with findings, observations or recommendations.
- Shall have no delegated decision-making authority unless expressly authorised by the Committee and permitted within the Committee's own delegated authority.

Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed annually by Full Council at the Annual Meeting, or earlier if required.

8. DELEGATION TO PARISH CLERK & RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

8.1 The delegations to Officers in this Scheme shall not be construed as a job description for any individual member of staff. The Scheme sets out specific delegations to Officers to act within defined parameters on behalf of the Council.

8.2 Delegated actions by Officers shall be exercised in accordance with Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, this Scheme of Delegation, adopted policies, approved budgets and any directions given by the Council from time to time.

8.3 The Council may, at any time and by resolution, revoke any delegated authority, without prejudice to executive action already taken.

8.4 Officers may decide not to exercise delegated authority and may instead make a recommendation to the Council or appropriate Committee.

(a) Parish Clerk / Proper Officer

8.5 The Parish Clerk shall be the Proper Officer of the Council and is authorised to exercise the duties and delegations of the Proper Officer contained within the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, this Scheme and relevant legislation.

8.6 The Parish Clerk may authorise another Officer or Officers of the Council to exercise specified administrative or operational functions in the Clerk's absence, without removing the overall responsibility of the Parish Clerk for such matters.

8.7 The Proper Officer shall have authority to issue written authorisation to individual Officers to act as the Council's authorised Officers in the performance of their statutory or other duties.

8.8 The Proper Officer shall be responsible for signing all Council Official Notices as set out in the Standing Orders and as required by law.

General Administration and Operational Management

8.9 The Parish Clerk has delegated authority to undertake the day-to-day administration of the Council's services, together with routine inspection, control and operational management in accordance with the Council's policies, procedures and approved budget.

8.10 The Parish Clerk has delegated authority to act on their own initiative to implement the Council's policies, objectives and resolutions.

8.11 The Parish Clerk has delegated authority to take appropriate steps to ensure that the Council does not exceed its powers.

8.12 The Parish Clerk has delegated authority to manage all Council facilities, land, assets and resources in accordance with the Council's policies, approved budget, legal obligations and any resolution of the Council.

8.13 The Parish Clerk may, in liaison with and after conferring with the Chair where appropriate, make such civic arrangements as are necessary.

8.14 The Parish Clerk has delegated authority to respond to consultations on behalf of the Council where the matter has previously been considered by members, or where a response is required before the next available Council meeting, provided that the response is consistent with Council policy or previous Council decisions.

8.15 The Parish Clerk, in consultation with councillors where practicable, has delegated authority to make comments on planning applications submitted to the Council by Wakefield Metropolitan District Council within the statutory consultation period where the deadline falls before the next Council meeting.

Staffing Management

8.16 The Parish Clerk is the manager for all staff employed by the Council and has delegated authority to manage Council staff in accordance with Council policies, procedures, contracts of employment and the approved staffing budget.

8.17 The Parish Clerk is responsible for day-to-day staffing arrangements, including staff rotas, annual leave, lieu time, sickness absence reporting, workload allocation, routine supervision and operational staff management.

8.18 The Parish Clerk has authority to approve additional hours worked by staff, where necessary for operational reasons, provided that such hours are managed through time off in lieu (TOIL), are recorded appropriately, and are in accordance with Council policy. No payment for overtime shall be authorised under this delegation unless separately approved by Council and provided for within the Council's adopted staffing arrangements.

8.19 The Parish Clerk shall record and manage their own additional hours and TOIL in accordance with Council policy. Short TOIL absences may be managed operationally by the Clerk and reported to the Employment & Staffing Committee at the next available meeting. Where the Clerk intends to take a full day, or a longer period, of TOIL absence, the Chair of Council, or Vice-Chair in the Chair's absence, shall be notified in advance for business continuity purposes.

8.20 The Parish Clerk has authority to engage casual or temporary workers, subject to budget provision and Council policy. Where such work is not routine, or may have wider staffing implications, the Clerk shall consult with the Employment & Staffing Committee where practicable.

8.21 The Parish Clerk may identify training needs for staff and councillors and authorise relevant training courses, provided that the expenditure can be met from approved budgets and is in accordance with the Council's training policy or training needs.

Financial and Contractual Delegations

8.22 As Proper Officer and/or Responsible Financial Officer, the Parish Clerk may incur expenditure on revenue items on behalf of the Council up to the amounts included in the approved budget, in accordance with Financial Regulations.

8.23 The Parish Clerk may authorise low-value routine purchases, online purchases, office supplies, stationery, equipment and operational consumables within the approved budget and in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, ensuring that receipts and records are retained.

8.24 The Parish Clerk may use any Council debit card, charge card, purchasing card or online payment method approved by the Council for low-value, routine or online purchases, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, banking arrangements and spending limits, ensuring that receipts are retained and transactions are properly recorded.

8.25 The Parish Clerk may approve urgent operational repairs or maintenance where delay would cause disruption to Council services, risk to health and safety, damage to Council assets, financial loss or reputational harm, provided that the expenditure is within the Clerk's delegated spending authority or emergency authority and is reported to the Council or relevant Committee as required.

8.26 The Parish Clerk may purchase routine operational consumables, including but not limited to first aid supplies, health and safety consumables and defibrillator consumables such as pads and batteries, within the approved budget and in accordance with Financial Regulations.

8.27 The Parish Clerk may make routine bookings for essential event services within agreed budgets and in accordance with Financial Regulations, where the event has been approved by the Council or relevant Committee.

8.28 In cases of urgency or emergency, the Parish Clerk is authorised to take any action necessary to protect the interests, assets, services, staff, users, legal position or reputation of the Council, including entering into contracts and authorising expenditure up to £2,000, without prior approval where delay would be detrimental to the Council. Where emergency action is taken under this delegation, the Parish Clerk shall notify the Chair, or Vice-Chair in their absence, as soon as practicable and report the action to the next meeting of the Council for ratification.

8.29 For the avoidance of doubt, the emergency delegation includes authority for the Parish Clerk to sign contracts or agreements required to ensure continuity of Council services or events where delay would cause financial loss, reputational harm, health and safety risk, service disruption or cancellation.

Health and Safety / Emergency Action

8.30 In the case of an emergency, the Parish Clerk has delegated authority to take reasonable steps to secure the Council's assets, services, staff, users, legal position or reputation, following consultation with the Chair where practicable in the circumstances.

8.31 The Parish Clerk has delegated authority to act immediately on all health and safety or emergency issues without waiting for endorsement by the Council or a Committee.

8.32 Where immediate action is taken under health and safety or emergency powers, the matter shall be reported to the next appropriate Council or Committee meeting.

Communications, Website and Social Media

8.33 The Parish Clerk has delegated authority to release press statements on any activities of the Council, subject to prior consultation with the Chair where the matter is sensitive, controversial or likely to create reputational risk.

8.34 Routine factual public notices, website updates, social media updates and operational communications may be issued by the Parish Clerk without prior Chair consultation, provided that they are consistent with Council policy, Council decisions, statutory requirements and data protection requirements.

8.35 The Parish Clerk shall have editorial control of the Council's website, social media accounts, official notices and routine public communications, in accordance with Council policy, statutory publication requirements, data protection requirements and any resolutions of the Council.

8.36 The Parish Clerk shall be responsible for ensuring that documents required to be published by law, transparency requirements, audit requirements or Council policy are published appropriately, subject to any necessary redactions or confidentiality restrictions.

(b) Responsible Financial Officer

8.37 The Responsible Financial Officer shall be responsible for all financial records of the Council and for the careful administration of the Council's finances and accounting procedures, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations in force at any given time, the Council's Financial Regulations, adopted policies and the law.

8.38 The Responsible Financial Officer shall ensure that the approved precept request is issued to the billing authority.

8.39 Following approval of the annual budget, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide members with a copy of the approved budget.

8.40 The Responsible Financial Officer shall have authority to release financial reports, budget monitoring reports and other finance-related documents to the Council, its Committees and members in the discharge of the Responsible Financial Officer's responsibilities.

8.41 The Responsible Financial Officer shall ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the financial administration of the Council during any period of absence, subject to Council policy, staffing arrangements, Financial Regulations and any directions of the Council.

8.42 The Responsible Financial Officer shall prepare and maintain the Council's accounting records, budget monitoring records, bank reconciliations, VAT records, payroll records where applicable, audit records and any other financial documents required for the proper administration of the Council's finances.

8.43 The Responsible Financial Officer shall ensure that financial reports are provided to the Council and relevant Committees as required by Financial Regulations, audit requirements, Council policy or resolution of the Council.

8.44 The Responsible Financial Officer shall support the Council in meeting its obligations under the Accounts and Audit Regulations, including the preparation of year-end accounting statements, internal audit documentation, external audit documentation and publication requirements.

8.45 The Responsible Financial Officer shall ensure that arrangements are made for bank reconciliations and other financial checks to be reviewed, verified and reported in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

8.46 The Responsible Financial Officer shall advise the Council, Committees and Officers on financial matters, budgetary implications, financial risk, internal controls and compliance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

9. REVIEW

9.1 This Scheme of Delegation shall be reviewed annually by the Council, or earlier where required by changes in legislation, staffing, Council structure, Financial Regulations, Standing Orders or operational requirements.