



WHITE COLNE PARISH COUNCIL

White Colne Village Hall, Bures Road, White Colne, CO6 2QA.

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BACKGROUND PAPER – 18.03.2025

Please note supporting information regarding the following Agenda items:

7v **PLANNING: Colchester City Council Preferred Options – Local Plan Review.**

CCC's [Preferred Options](#) includes proposed land for development totalling approx. 235 new dwellings, and extra land for employment use at Chappel & Wakes Colne. Policies PP27, PP28, & PEP12 are available on pages 219-223.

CCC's [Local Plan Policies Maps](#) depicts the proposed development of Chappel & Wakes Colne on p8.

8i **HIGHWAYS: Bures Road – Speed Indicator Device; Speed survey.**

At WCPC's January meeting, Cllr Siddall suggested the council could consider commissioning a speed survey on Bures Road. Any information gained *could* help make the case for traffic mitigation measures.

9iii **FINANCE: New Model Financial Regulations.**

The New Model Financial Regulations are circulated to members with the meeting Agenda & Appendices. Please review the document ahead of the meeting.

Here follows *Notes to assist in the use of the new Model Financial Regulations*, numbered 1 – 12, which were disseminated by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

A table is also provided below, which members may use to note alterations to the paragraphs listed.

Any **text highlighted yellow** in the Financial Regulations document requires a decision by the council.

Any **text highlighted yellow and struck through** in the Financial Regulations document requires a decision by the council on whether to remove it altogether.

Any **text highlighted blue** in the Financial Regulations document shows an amendment which does not need a decision by the council.

- 1) The document is a model for councils of all sizes to use to develop their own financial regulations, suitable for the size of the council and the activities it undertakes.
- 2) **Bold text** indicates legal requirements, which a council cannot change or suspend.
- 3) For the rest, each council needs to adapt the model to suit its size and structure. For example, some councils have both a clerk and RFO, possibly with several more staff, while others have a single employee as clerk/RFO. Some councils have committees, some have a high level of delegation, and some make all decisions at full council meetings. Many now use online payment methods, but others still rely on cheques.
- 4) Curly brackets indicate words, sentences or sections that can be either be removed if not applicable, or amended to fit the council's circumstances. An example of this is

the phrase {or duly delegated committee}, which can be deleted if there are no committees.

- 5) Specific areas that may need adapting:
 - a) In 1.5 – is the Clerk the RFO?
 - b) In 3.3 and 3.4, the words “Governance and Accountability” do not apply in Wales.
 - c) In section 4, does the council have committees and how many years are forecast?
 - d) In 5.6, does the council issue an open invitation to tender, or invite specific firms?
 - e) In 5.9, are online prices acceptable evidence?
 - f) In 5.13, 5.15 and 5.17, does the council have committees?
 - g) In 5.16, will a councillor ever be instructed to place an order?
 - h) In 5.20, is there a minimum level for official orders?
 - i) Section 6 includes several alternatives to cover delegation to committees or to officers, approval of invoices individually or in batches, or for approval of regular contractual payments at the beginning of the year.
 - j) Sections 7, 8 and 9 also includes several alternatives, including wording for where the clerk is a signatory. These are intended to allow a council’s financial regulations to fit what they actually do, not to force any council to change what they do.
 - k) Section 10 gives two alternatives, with or without petty cash.
 - l) 13.6 has alternatives for VAT-registered and unregistered councils – only use one.
 - m) 13.7 and 13.8 are removable if they don’t apply to the council.
 - n) Much of Section 16 can be deleted if not applicable.
- 6) Square brackets indicate where the council needs to specify who, or how much, or what the timescale is. For example [£500] might need to be £100, or [October] might need to be November, or [the council] might need to say the Policy and Resources Committee.
 - a) In 4.1 and 4.7, select the wording for England or Wales, based on your location.
 - b) In Section 4, the council needs to determine the timescale for its budget setting.
- 7) It is challenging to try to offer guidance on setting financial limits. A council spending £1,000 a year is unlikely to delegate authority to spend £500 to its proper officer, but one spending £5 million a year might regard £5,000 as a reasonable limit. Each council needs to determine its own limits, that help, rather than hinder, its operations.
- 8) Key limits to set:
 - a) In 5.6, at what limit will the council require a formal tender process to ensure fair competition, rather than just asking for quotes? If this is set too low, it may discourage suppliers. Many small councils might only use formal tenders once every few years.
 - b) In 5.8, at what limit will the council require fixed-price quotes rather than estimates?
 - c) In 5.9, at what level can smaller purchases be made without competition?
 - d) In 5.15, at what level can purchases be made under delegated authority (having complied with the rules about obtaining prices)?
 - e) In 5.18, how much can the clerk commit to spending in an emergency?
 - f) In 6.9, can payment of invoices (for purchases that have already been authorised) be authorised by an officer under delegated authority as a general principle, or only to avoid problems?
 - g) In Section 9, what are the limits for card payments?
 - h) In 16.5, what value of assets can be bought or disposed of, without seeking council approval?
- 9) The contents list is a table that extracts section headings from the document. It can be updated by clicking on the contents list, whereupon a tab saying “update table” appears at the top of the list.

- 10) Once this model has been tailored to fit the council's needs, the resulting Financial Regulations (with the insertion of the council's name at the top) should be adopted at a meeting of the full council. The date of adoption should be inserted below the Contents. Any subsequent proposal for amendment should also be made to the full council.
- 11) The council should keep abreast of developments in legislation that affect the local council sector and should review and update its Financial Regulations annually.
- 12) Please ensure that the latest approved version is published on the council's website.

Model Financial Regulations alterations		
Paragraph	Suggestion	Resolution
2.6	Alter: 'any member(s) shall review & verify bank reconciliations'	
4.2	Remove text	
4.3 i	Change to 'January'	
4.3 ii	Remove text	
4.6	Remove text	
4.7	Remove text	
5.6	Resolve correct figure	
5.8	Resolve correct figure	
5.9	Resolve correct figure	
5.15 i	Resolve correct figure	
5.15 ii	Resolve correct figure	
5.15 iii	Remove	
5.15 iv	Remove	
5.18	Resolve correct figure	
5.20	Remove	
6.6	Remove	
6.7	Remove	
6.8	Remove	
6.9 i	Resolve correct figure	
6.9 ii	Resolve correct figure	
6.9 iii	Remove text	
7.1	Change to 'three members' to remove need for email responses	
7.7	Remove text – available on Unity Trust Bank	
7.9	Alter: 'signed in accordance with the banking mandate'	
8.1	Remove	
8.2	Remove	
8.3	Remove	
8.4	Remove	
9.1	Resolve correct figure	
9.4	Resolve correct figure	
13.7	Remove	
13.8	Remove	
16.5	Resolve correct figure	
18.1	Remove	

9iii FINANCE: Parish Council members' allowances.

In accordance with the Local Government (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 and the Local Government (Members' Allowances) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2003, any Parish Council wishing to pay allowances or travel and subsistence to its councillors will need to have in place an agreed and publicised Scheme of Allowances, and in making or amending such a scheme will need to demonstrate that it has considered recommendations from a Parish Independent Remuneration Panel [PIRP].

The allowances that a Parish Council may pay are Parish Basic Allowance (with or without an enhanced Chairman's allowance) and Parish Travel and Subsistence. There is NO PROVISION within the current Regulations to permit the payment of either Special Responsibility Allowance or Carers' Allowances.

An individual Parish Council remains free to set whatever allowance levels it considers appropriate to its own circumstances provided that decision complies with the Regulations, is taken at a meeting of its Full Council and the subsequent decision is duly advertised.

In order to attract a diverse range of potential members of the council, WCPC could see fit to allow for Members' Allowances in preparations of the 2026-27 council budget.