



# Bude-Stratton Town Council

---

## Financial Risk Management Policy

## Table of Contents

1. Cash Handling	3
2. Receipts	3
3. Payments	3
4. Transfer of monies between Town Council accounts	4
5. Bank Reconciliations	4
6. Reporting to members	4
7. Income	4
8. Expenditure	5
9. Purchases	5
10. Other Risks	5
11. Protection of computer equipment	6
12. Financial risk management by insurance	6

A copy of this document is also available in different formats such as large print, Braille, audio or in a different language. Please contact the office if this is required.

Financial risks can be managed by effective internal controls, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and by Insurance.

## **Internal Financial Controls**

### **1. Cash Handling**

- Petty Cash is regularly recorded and reconciled.

### **2. Receipts**

- Cheque receipts are banked at least weekly and more frequently if a substantial cheque is received.
- Receipts are often paid directly by BACS to the Town Council's bank account and are checked off from the bank statements.

### **3. Payments**

- All cheques from the main Town Council accounts require 2 signatures from two members.
- All payments are authorised by the Clerk after the invoice or other documentation has been verified against order/quotations or minutes as appropriate.
- Members signing the cheque or authorising the online payments will have sight of the invoice/documentation and should initial the cheque counterfoils and invoices or authorise the payment via online access. When Direct Debits are used 2 members' signatures are required on the direct debit paperwork. Payments by Direct Debit will show in the list of payments presented to council at each monthly meeting (see item 6).
- All Direct Debit payments are to be reviewed by members on an annual basis.
- Payments over £500 require the prior approval of the Full Council, except if the expenditure has previously been approved by a Committee, the invoice is as expected (in line with the original estimate) and the expenditure is within that Committee's budget.
- All payments should be issued promptly after approval by the Council.
- Online banking can be used to transfer between accounts or to pay invoices in accordance with the 2 signature policy for Direct Debit or cheque payments.

**Unusual payments over £1000 still require the approval of Council at its monthly meeting.**

#### **4. Transfer of monies between Town Council accounts**

The Town Council maintains the following bank accounts;

1. Current account with Unity Trust Bank
2. Savings accounts with Unity Trust Bank
3. The Town Council can also invest in Bonds and higher rate savings accounts to obtain the best return with low risk

The Town Council will ensure that adequate training is given to officers of the council including the Castle café and library who deal with cash and movement of money.

#### **5. Bank Reconciliations**

The RFO monitors these on a monthly basis to verify that the monthly computer generated reconciliations are the same as the monthly bank statements received. Nominated Councillors (non-cheque signatories) also check these reconciliations on a regular basis against original bank statements, and sign to confirm that these have been checked.

Monthly management checks are carried out including the following:

- Payroll Control account: Should be zero balance
- Sales Ledger: to ensure the control account balances
- VAT: to check the control account balances

#### **6. Reporting to members**

- A list of all payments is made available to all members at Full Council meetings.
- At Full Council meetings members receive a copy of the management reports which show expenditure against budget under each specific committee heading on a quarterly basis.
- A copy of the report for the specific committee is also available at committee meetings for members to consider when deciding expenditure.

#### **7. Income**

The risk of non-receipt of anticipated income is managed in the following manner:

- The RFO ensures that committees prepare their budgets in time to make a recommendation to Full Council so that the Town Council can submit the precept request in time.

- Sufficient funds are held in the General Reserves to ensure that payment of all necessary expenditure can be met for at least 3 months. This includes rent, rates, utilities and salaries.
- The precept payment is usually received by BACS on or before 30 April and 30 September each year, and the RFO ensures the payment is received as expected.
- Recovery of VAT: This is claimed quarterly, against a reconciliation produced by the computerised accounts records, or more frequently if a substantial amount of VAT has been paid. This is checked to ensure it balances as part of the monthly management of accounts by the RFO.

## 8. Expenditure

The largest expenditure item is the payment of salaries.

- This is administered by the RFO
- Data is checked by the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk before submission and a further check is carried out before the payments are finalised

## 9. Purchases

Risks include non-supply of goods, incorrect charge on invoice and incorrect payment. Risks are covered by checking invoices which are signed off by the officer who ordered the goods and the system of verification of cheque payments.

## 10. Other Risks

- **Adequate reserves:** This is assessed annually as part of the budget setting process.
- **Loss/damage to assets:** Assets are regularly inspected. Loss or damage is also included in the Town Council's Insurance Policy.
- **Fraud by staff:** A member of the Council who is not a cheque signatory verifies totals on original bank statements to Cash Book statements produced by the accounts programme. Fraud is covered by insurance.
- **Office security:** The Town Council office is protected by a fire alarm and an intruder alarm. The Castle and library are protected by fire and intruder alarms.
- **Security of documents:** Original title deeds are lodged with the Town Council's Solicitors, and archived lease information is stored at the Cornwall record archives at Kresen Kernow.

Office staff are also trained on matters concerning FOI and Data Protection, and meeting notes are not held once minutes have been approved.

**11. Protection of computer information**

- a) Access to computers is by password only.
- b) Information is remotely backed up on a daily basis and stored remotely.

\*\*\*\*\*

**12. Financial Risk Management by Insurance**

Fraud by staff: Potential losses from dishonesty by staff (fraud) are covered by the Fidelity Guarantee which forms part of the Town Council’s Insurance Policy. This figure is reviewed annually.

Loss of/damage to assets: Loss of/damage to assets is covered by insurance. The value is reviewed annually.

This Financial Risk Management Policy shall be reviewed every year.

.