



MEETING OF ALVANLEY PARISH COUNCIL

To the Members of Alvanley Parish Council: You are hereby summoned to attend the Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 15th April 2026 to be held in Alvanley Village Hall, which will begin at 19.00hrs for the transaction of the business set out below.

Signed *Trudy Ryall-Harvey*, Clerk
08/04/2026

parishclerk@alvanleyparishcouncil.co.uk
07784 486 767

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND ALL COUNCIL MEETINGS
(Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960)

AGENDA

1.	APOLOGIES	and reason for absence.
2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	Members to declare any interest under the following categories: pecuniary, outside body and family, friend or close associate.
3.	EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	Council is asked to discuss excluding the Press and Public for any items listed on the below agenda. <small>The Parish Council may exercise their right to exclude the public and press by resolution from a closed meeting due to the confidential nature to be discussed pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.</small>
4.	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	When members of the public may comment or raise questions regarding matters affecting the Parish. <i>(max. of 3 minutes per person without prior agreement with Chair and for a total of 10 minutes).</i> <i>This provides an opportunity for members of the public (who are not usually permitted to speak during the meeting except by special invitation of the Chairman) to participate by asking questions, raising concerns or making comments on matters affecting Alvanley. No decision can be taken during this session, but the Chairman may decide to refer any matters raised for further consideration.</i> <i>N.B. Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business that is not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 Sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119</i>
5.	MINUTES	To approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 4 th March 2026
6.	ACTIONS	To receive verbal updates on any actions from the minutes since the last meeting:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fingerpost – Helsby/Frodsham road junction - Update on Wifi for Alvanley Village Hall - Snowdrop Village - Community Litter picking Even - Christmas Illuminations - Civility and Respect
7.	MEETINGS ATTENDED	To receive verbal reports on meetings attended by Councillors since the last meeting.
8.	PLANNING	1) To note planning applications as listed on the planning register, including comments submitted since the last meeting and enforcement matters. 2) To note any planning applications received since the distribution of the Agenda.
9.	ACCOUNTS	1) To accept the Cash Book and Out-turn (Forecast) to date. 2) To approve the setting up of Direct Debit payment for Payroll Provider. 3) To approve the end of year bank reconciliation. 4) To approve payments made since last meeting.
10.	PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS	1) To review the policy schedule and agree those that require updating. 2) To review and agree the adoption of:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bio-diversity Policy - Community Engagement Policy - Co-option Policy and Procedures - Data Retention Schedule

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equality and Diversity Policy - Financial Regulations – Updated 2026 - IT Policy - Training Policy <p>3) Parish Councillor Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to review and agree the Training Log for Parish Councillors. - to review the CHaLC Training Schedule and agree any further training requirements for the year for Parish Councillors. <p>4) Roles and Responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To review all roles and responsibilities held by members of the Parish Council and agree their renewal for 2026-27. <p>5) To agree and adopt the Parish Council’s Annual Report for 2025-26</p> <p>6) To receive an update on the setting up of .gov.uk website.</p> <p>7) Letter of thanks to CWaC – to discuss and agree sending a letter of thanks to CWaC following the resurfacing of Burrows Lane.</p> <p>8) To discuss and agree if the Parish Council wishes to set up ‘Shared Drive’ to allow Councillors access to all Parish Council documents.</p> <p>9) NALC Bronze Award – to discuss applying for the Local Council Award Scheme - Bronze Award.</p> <p>10) Co-option – to discuss and vote on any applications for co-option.</p>
11.	AGENDA ITEMS	To receive any items for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting
	DATE OF NEXT MEETING	Annual Meeting will take place on Wednesday 20 th May 2026 at Alvanley Village Hall at 19.00 hrs.



MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON 4TH MARCH 2026
AT 19.00HRS AT ALVANLEY VILLAGE HALL

In Attendance: Cllr B Crowe

Cllr J Hughes (Chair)

Cllr A Mahoney

Cllr H Lodge

Cllr D Gilbert

Clerk: Mrs T Ryall-Harvey

Members of the Public: 0

APPOINTMENT OF CLERK & RFO

Proposed by Cllr Lodge, seconded by Cllr Mahoney and unanimously RESOLVED 26/001 to accept the appointment of Mrs T Ryall-Harvey as the Clerk and RFO of Alvanley Parish Council. The contract had been signed by the Chairman and Clerk outside of the meeting.

APOLOGIES: No apologies were received.

DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE INTERESTS –

Cllr Lodge declared a non-pecuniary interest on any issues relating to the planning consultation 25/02767/FUL Cliff Farm, Commonside, Alvanley, Frodsham due to being friends of the applicant and undertook not to vote on any matter.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC - it was agreed that there were no issues that needed to be discussed with the exclusion of Press and Public.

PUBLIC SESSION

Cllr Crowe asked if anyone had heard of a 'Rural Northern Broadband Company/Organisation', as it had recently been reported that this company had been helpful in bringing broadband to village halls.

Commonside Crossroad –Cllr Lodge reported about a further accident that had taken place recent at this Crossroad.

MINUTES

RESOLVED 26/002 that the Chairman signs, as a true and correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 14th January 2026 proposed by Cllr Gilbert and seconded by Cllr Mahoney and unanimously agreed.

ACTIONS (*not otherwise on the agenda*)

Verbal reports on the following issues were received:-

- Flooding on Frodsham Road – Cllr Hughes provided an history the issue to the meeting and confirmed that following CWaC confirming to the landowner that it was their responsibility to ensure the water does not remain on the road a trench has been dug by the landowners to take the water off the road, which has now resolved the issue.
 - Commonside Crossroads – Cllr Lodge reported upon another accident had occurred yesterday between a van and a motorbike. It was reported that this was the third accident.
- Gowy Beat Meeting – Cllr Hughes raised concerns that Parish Council had about accidents at Commonside

Crossroads to a recent meeting she had attended with the Local Police Beat Officer and he confirmed that only accidents that incur an injury are reported to CWaC.

ACTION: Awaiting CWaC who are looking to repaint the road markings.

Cheshire Railings – Cllr Hughes reported that the previous Clerk had received confirmation that all the Cheshire Railings in the area were owned and should be maintained by CWaC.

- Fingerpost – Helsby/Frodsham Road Junction – it was reported that following the fingerpost being damaged, this had been removed by a local farmer and stored for safe keeping whilst a repair was undertaken. It was confirmed to the Parish Council meeting that the farmer had repaired it.

ACTION: The Parish Council to arrange for it's reinstallation.

ACTION: Cllr Lodge to obtain quotes to paint the fingerpost (3 x fingerposts and 1 x milestone – including the fingerpost sign that is located on Helsby/Alvanley border at Bates Lane/Tarvin Road junction in Helsby)

ACTION: Cllr Hughes to check with Helsby to see if they will contribute towards the cost of painting the above fingerpost in Helsby.

- Wifi for Village Hall – Cllr Hughes reported that the Caretaker was waiting on EE Charity Liaison Worker to get back in touch in relation to installing Wifi in the Village Hall.

MEETINGS ATTENDED

Cllr Hughes provided a verbal report on the recent joint meeting between Parish Councils and Police that had been organised for 25th February in Manley Village Hall, she confirmed that the Beat Office had reported that there was a low level of crime in the area.

Cllr Crowe reported on attending the Full Governors Board Meeting at Manley School on 2nd Feb where various items were raised including staff issues and pupil attendance.

Cllr Crowe reported on attending an Early Years Link meeting on 24th February at Manley School where progress of the September intake was reported.

Cllr Crowe reported that she attended a Zoom Meeting for the Rural Need Survey on 26th February and had circulated the information around the Parish Councillors following the meeting.

PLANNING

The Planning Register dated 16/02/2026 was accepted. It was noted that no new planning consultations had been received in since the last meeting.

It was noted that the following application had been determined by the Local Authority since the last meeting:-

- 25/04037/PDQ – Land on the North Side of Commonsides, Commonsides, Alvanley, Frodsham WA6 9HB – Partial conversion of an existing agricultural building to one dwelling – *prior approval requires permission*.

FINANCIAL ITEMS

Cashbook

Proposed by Cllr Lodge, seconded by Cllr Mahoney and unanimously RESOLVED 26/003 that the Year to date cashbook dated 16/02/2026 be approved as a true and correct record.

Bank Mandate

Proposed by Cllr Lodge, seconded by Cllr Mahoney and unanimously RESOLVED 26/004 that the Bank Mandate be brought up to date.

VAT Rebate Application – Proposed by Cllr Gilbert, seconded by Cllr Lodge and unanimously RESOLVED 26/005 that the clerk submit the VAT Rebate Application for 2024-26 of £534.14 in March.

Payroll Provider for 2026-27 – following the Clerk seeking quotes for Payroll provision for 2026-27 it was proposed by Cllr Lodge and seconded by Cllr Gilbert and unanimously RESOLVED 26/006 that the Accounts Centre be asked to undertake these services for 2026-27.

Payments by Direct Debit – proposed by Cllr Lodge, seconded by Cllr Mahoney and unanimously RESOLVED 26/007 to continue paying the ICO subscription and CTS Systems (until the new website is running) by Direct Debit and these be the only two payments authorised to be paid by Direct Debit.

Internal Auditor for 2025-26

Proposed by Cllr Gilbert, seconded by Cllr Crowe and unanimously RESOLVED 26/008 to instruct Mrs Kath Lloyd to undertake the Internal Auditor for 2025-26.

Payments for approval:-

Proposed by Cllr Crowe, seconded by Cllr Lodge and unanimously RESOLVED 26/009 to accept the list below of income received and payments made or due to be made since the last meeting for approval.

Income received since the last meeting

Date	Received From	Gross Amount	Comment
30/01/2026	Bank Interest	£2.92	Bank Interest for January 2026

Payments made since the last meeting - for noting

Date	Payable to	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount	Comment
05/02/2026	CTA Systems	£58.40	£11.68	£70.08	Website and Email Provision
05/03/2026	CTA Systems	£58.40	£11.68	£70.08	Website and Email Provision

Payments not yet made - for approval

Payable to	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount	Comment
Alvanley Village Hall	£240.00	£0.00	£240.00	Hire of Village Hall during Financial Year 24-25
Alvanley Village Hall	£240.00	£0.00	£240.00	Hire of Village Hall during Financial Year 25-26
D Bowker	£399.52	£0.00	£399.52	Clerk's Salary to 17th February & Expenses
HMRC	£95.20	£0.00	£95.20	PAYE Payment for D Bowker
Clerk's Salary	£523.44	£0.00	£523.44	Payroll from 18-02-2026 to 31-03-2026
HMRC	£41.20	£0.00	£41.20	PAYE Payment for Clerk
HMRC	£135.40	£0.00	£135.40	PAYE Payment for Clerk

PARISH COUNCIL MATTERS

Strategic Plan for 2026 - Proposed by Cllr Lodge, seconded by Cllr Crowe and unanimously RESOLVED 26/010 that the updated Strategy Plan for 2026 be approved as circulate prior to the meeting.

Cllr Crowe asked if Alvanley Agricultural Services and the Woodworking Company at Commonsides could be

included in the plan as companies that have supported the local area. Cllr Gilbert advised that Alvanley Agricultural Services had been included in 2026 plan as they are supporting with the repair of the finger posts. Cllr Gilbert also stated that if Cllr Crowe could advise what support the Woodworking Company had provided in 2025 or 2026 then of course their name would also be included.

Polices and Procedures for approval – proposed by Cllr Gilbert, seconded by Cllr Lodge and unanimously RESOLVED 26/011 that the following policies be adopted:-

- Publication Scheme
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Complaints Procedures
- Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy

Risk Management Policy - Proposed by Cllr Lodge, seconded by Cllr Mahoney and unanimously RESOLVED 26/012 that the Risk Management Policy and Risk Assessment that were circulated prior to the meeting and reviewed be approved in preparation for the Internal Audit.

Civility and Respect Pledge

Proposed by Cllr Hughes, seconded by Cllr Mahoney and majority RESOLVED 26/013 that the Parish Council wished to sign up to the Civility and Respect Pledge and agreed to all of the following statements:-

Statement	Tick to agree
Our council has agreed that it will treat all councillors, clerk and all employees, members of the public, representatives of partner organisations, and volunteers, with civility and respect in their role.	✓
Our council has put in place a training programme for councillors and staff	✓
Our council has signed up to Code of Conduct for councillors	✓
Our council has good governance arrangements in place including, staff contracts, and a dignity at work policy.	✓
Our council will commit to seeking professional help in the early stages should civility and respect issues arise.	✓
Our council will commit to calling out bullying and harassment when if and when it happens.	✓
Our council will continue to learn from best practice in the sector and aspire to being a role model/champion council e.g., via the Local Council Award Scheme	✓
Our council supports the continued lobbying for the change in legislation to support the Civility and Respect Pledge, including sanctions for elected members where appropriate.	✓

Asset Register for 2026 Proposed by Cllr Gilbert, seconded by Cllr Lodge and unanimously RESOLVED 26/014 that the amended Asset Register be approved as circulated prior to the meeting.

Website the Clerk reported that she had added to the current website the Agenda and Minutes since April 2025, the AGAR and Financial Year End Reports for 2024-25, the Policies and Procedures that were in place and the members interests to allow the current website to be more legally compliant with the transparency requirements.

ACTION: JKE – to take over providing a new .gov.uk website from April.

ACTION: Give CTA Systems notice once precept has been received.

Christmas Illuminations - it was reported that following the disappointing failure of the tree wrapped illuminations in 2025 that quotes for a new set of wrapping should be sought. It was reported that the trees would need pruning back prior to them being re-wrapped.

ACTION: Get quotes to remove the lights and re-wrap three trees.

ACTION: Ask Helsby who they are using to supply the festive lights contractors.

ACTION: Ask CWaC to prune the trees ready for Christmas light wrapping.

Snowdrop Village – following a meeting between a resident and Cllrs Hughes & Gilbert it was reported that a bulb planting working party was taking place on Saturday 7th March where snowdrops that have been kindly donated by a resident were to be planted.

Parish Meeting – it was agreed that the Parish Meeting would take place on 15th April at 6.30pm

Items for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting:-

The Clerk confirmed additional policies would be on the agenda for the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be the Parish Council Meeting and will take place on Wednesday 15th April 2026 at Alvanley Village Hall at 19.00hrs.

The meeting closed at 20.06

Signed:.....

Dated:.....

Alvanley Parish Council Planning Register 2024-25 – Awaiting determination

Received	Number	Location	Description	PC Response	Result
Fri 19 Jul 2024	24/02121/FUL	The Cedars Towers Lane Alvanley Frodsham WA6 0LG	Remodelling of existing dwelling (Revised Description)	No comments submitted	Awaiting decision

Alvanley Parish Council Planning Register 2025-26

Received	Number	Location	Description	PC Response	Result
Thu 23 Jan 2025	25/00183/LBC	Birch Cottage Back Lane Alvanley Frodsham WA6 9AW	Part Retrospective application for a new timber outbuilding and for the extension and alterations carried out to Birch cottage including; replacement windows, rethatching the roof, replacement single ply flat roof membrane, single storey extension and conversion of the garage into living space	Objected	Approved
Thu 23 Jan 2025	25/00182/FUL	Birch Cottage Back Lane Alvanley Frodsham WA6 9AW	Part Retrospective application for a new timber outbuilding and for the extension and alterations carried out to Birch cottage including; replacement windows, rethatching the roof, replacement single ply flat roof membrane, single storey extension and conversion of the garage into living space	Objected	Approved
Mon 28 Apr 2025	25/01329/FUL	The Cottage Back Lane Alvanley Frodsham WA6 9AW	Single storey extension	No Objection	Approved
Wed 03 Sep 2025	25/02767/FUL	Cliff Farm Commonside Alvanley Frodsham WA6 9HA	Installation of 100 ground- mounted solar photovoltaic panels (approx. 55 kWp) on land to provide renewable energy for the dwellinghouse.	No comments submitted	Awaiting decision
Wed 24 Dec 2025	25/04037/PDQ	Land On The North Side of Commonside Commonside Alvanley Frodsham WA6 9HB	Partial conversion of an existing agricultural building to one dwelling	Comments Submitted	Prior approval requires permissio n

AGR – Agricultural application
 CAT – Conservation area tree
 FUL – Full application
 LBC – Listed building consent
 PDQ – Agricultural Buildings to Dwelling Houses
 REF - Appeal
 S73 – Minor material amendments
 LDC – Lawful Development Certificate
 TPO – Tree Preservation Order

Trudy Ryall-Harvey
 01/04/2026

Alvanley Parish Council

Bank Reconciliation to Cashbook 1st April 2026

Presented at Council Meeting - Wednesday 15th April 2026

Balance shown on Cashbook	£2,469.47
Current Account	£280.08
Reserves Account	£2,189.39
Less: Uncleared payments	
TOTAL	£2,469.47
Reconciliation	Yes



SLA P.C.OF ALVANLEY

ⓘ **£280.08**

Business Current



SLA PCC OF ALVANLEY

£2,189.39

Available: £2,189.39



+ [Your interest rate](#)

Income received since the last meeting

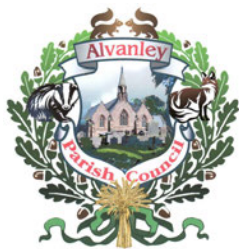
Date	Received From	Gross Amount	Comment
10/03/2026	HMRC VTR	£534.14	VAT Rebate
27/02/2026	Bank Interest	£2.44	Bank Interest - February
31/03/2026	Bank Interest	£1.80	Bank Interest - March

Payments made since the last meeting - for noting

Date	Payable to	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount	Comment
24/03/2026	CHaLC	£105.00		£105.00	CHALC - Planning Training (Hughes)
05/04/2026	CTA Systems	£58.40	£11.68	£70.08	Website and Email Provision

Payments not yet made - for approval

Date	Payable to	Net Amount	VAT	Gross Amount	Comment
	Clerk's Salary	£358.04	£0.00	£523.44	Payroll for Tax Period 1
	HMRC	£94.20	£0.00	£94.20	PAYE Payment for Clerk - Tax Period 1
	Clerk's Expenses	£31.32	£1.57	£32.89	Stationery, Mileage and contribution to



Alvanley Parish Council

Policies – Review Schedule

Policy	Date Agreed	Date Last Reviewed	Date Next Reviewed	Who to review
Bio-diversity Policy	Pending			
Community Engagement Policy	Pending			
Co-option Policy	Pending			
Data Protection Policy	05-06-2025	05-06-2025	June 2026	
Dignity at Work Policy	04-03-2025	04-03-2025	April 2026	
Equality and Diversity Policy				
Health & Safety Policy	03-09-2025	03-09-2025	Sept 2026	
Information Technology (IT) Policy	Pending			
Management of Risks Policy				
Social Media and Electronic Communications Policy	04-03-2026	04-03-2026	April 2027	
Transparency Policy	17-07-2025	17/07/2025	July 2026	
Privacy Policy	Nov 19	April 25	April 26	
Scheme of Delegation	Pending			
Staff Absence Policy	Pending			
Training Policy	Pending			

Statutory Statements – Review Schedule

Policy	Date Agreed	Date Last Reviewed	Date Next Reviewed	Who to review
Website Accessibility Statement	Pending			

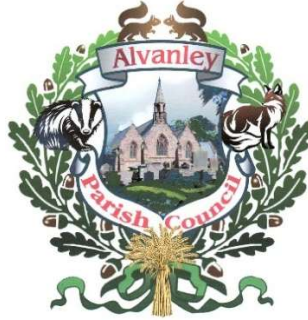
Procedures – Review Schedule

Document	Date Agreed	Date Last Reviewed	Date Next Reviewed	Who to review
Code of Conduct	18-05-2022	18-05-2022	May 2027	
Complaints Procedures	04-04-2025	04-04-2025	May 2027	
Data Retention Schedule	Pending			
Disciplinary Procedure	14-04-2025	14-04-2025	April 2026	

Financial Regulations	03-09-2025	03-09-2025	Pending	
Financial Process	03-09-2025	03-09-2025	Sept 2026	
Publication Scheme	04-03-2026	04-03-2026	March 2027	
Grievance Procedure	14-04-2025	04-04-2025	April 2029	
Standing Orders	17-07-2025	17-07-2025	July 2026	

Risk Management – Review Schedule

Document	Date Agreed	Date Last Reviewed	Date Next Reviewed	Who to review
General Risks Assessment	03-09-2025	03-09-2025	Sept 2026	
Risk Assessment – Litter Picking	23-01-2026		January 2027	



BIODIVERSITY DUTY POLICY

1. Background

In accordance with the duty imposed on town and parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, Alvanley Parish Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective.

This duty also means that town and parish councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

2. Definition

According to Defra (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants – everything that is alive on our planet.

Biodiversity is important for its own sake and has its own intrinsic value. A number of studies have shown this value also goes further. Biodiversity is the building block of our 'ecosystems' that in turn provide us with a wide range of goods and services that support our economic and social wellbeing. These include essentials such as food, fresh water and clean air, but also less obvious services such as protection from natural disasters, regulation of our climate, and purification of our water or pollination of our crops. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching our lives.

3. Aims and Objectives

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Council's area.

The Full Council and any committees of the Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

In particular, the Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.
- Include as a standing consideration in all committee reports.
- manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote
- biodiversity – use of checklists or impact assessments
- support local businesses and council operations in the adoption of low impact / nature positive practices.
- encourage and support other organisations within the parish / town to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.
- ensure the training of councillors and staff.

4. Actions

Planning Applications

The Council will:

- when commenting on planning applications, support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
- support protection of sensitive habitats from development and will consider whether the development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife in respect of all applications.
- consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.
- include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan.

Land and Property Management

The Council will:

- consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regarding to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work, paying attention to the Government's regulations for plant protection products.
- take special care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.
- source sustainable materials when procuring supplies for the Council's use.

Local Community

The Council will:

- raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and newsletters.
- engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.
- where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including for example tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.

Partners

The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area. It will review any local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies, or protected site strategies in respect of local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

5. Review

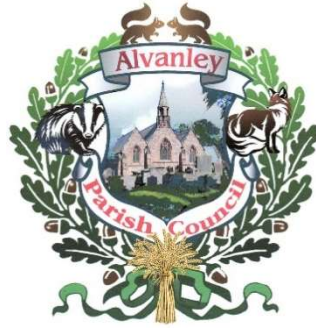
The Biodiversity Duty Policy was approved for use at the meeting of the Parish Council on ?????, a summary of any ways the Parish Council has been able to implement this will be published annual in the Council's Annual Report.

Signed:

APPENDIX 1 – BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

SITE / OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
Whole council area	Raise local awareness of biodiversity	Gain local support for action.		Correspondent, social media, website
Protect and support biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity	Create Snowdrop garden in the village	2 years	
Common / other open spaces	<p>Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs.</p> <p>Work with the county council on verge management, favouring biodiversity but noting which areas may need cutting for highway safety.</p> <p>Encourage residents to adopt areas to look after, making it clear what is expected e.g. peat free compost and no chemicals.</p>	<p>Sustain and enhance natural habitats.</p> <p>Protecting habitats</p> <p>Protecting/enhancing habitats</p>		
The Built Landscape	Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries	Protecting/enhancing habitats		
Increase community awareness of biodiversity	<p>Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the parish.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife, with possible actions</p>	<p>Engagement/ownership of biodiversity</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p>		

	<p>highlighted in the parish magazine.</p> <p>Encourage local farmers to contribute.</p> <p>Discourage floodlighting.</p>	<p>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Protect nocturnal animals</p>		
Support Community Projects	<p>Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas</p> <p>Work in partnership with the school to develop young people's awareness of the environment around them.</p>	<p>Extending habitats.</p> <p>Promote biodiversity</p>		



Community Engagement Policy – Statement of Intent

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Alvanley Parish Council aims to ensure that through the use of a wide range of approaches to public consultation and community engagement it actively encourages residents to inform its decision-making process and make an input into decisions which affect their day to day lives in the parish.

Alvanley Parish Council is committed to creating and maintaining effective working relationships with all sectors of the community. The Council recognises that there are different levels of engagement and will endeavour to involve the community in the following ways:

- Inform people about its work and the services it provides
- Consult with and seek out the views of the community
- Encourage community participation in local government
- Collaborate with individuals, community groups and organisations where appropriate, to achieve agreed aims for the benefit of the parish
- Build up effective working relationships within the community and encourage a sense of ownership of assets, infrastructure and new projects.

THE COMMUNITY

Alvanley Parish Council seeks to engage with all sections of the community regardless of age, ability, gender, ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation i.e. parishioners (particularly hard to reach groups such as the young, disenfranchised, disaffected and the elderly), clubs, organisations and societies which are active in the parish, its partners such as Cheshire West and Chester Council, the neighbourhood policing team. The Parish Council is also committed to engaging with any persons who appear to it to have an interest in matters relating to the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area.

The Council will ensure that engagement activities involving children or vulnerable adults follow appropriate safeguarding principles. **PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO THE COMMUNITY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Alvanley Parish Council website is a resource which publishes information about the Council, including agendas, minutes and other documents. It is also a source of information about the local community. Enquirers are invited to contact the Parish Council via the website, or email parishclerk@alvanleyparishcouncil.co.uk

- **Direct Access:** The Parish Council will display a list of Councillors (contact details together with other important information on its website. This medium will also be used to directly

advertise other important events e.g. notices relating to the annual audit of accounts; vacancies, elections and forthcoming meetings etc

- Meetings: Notice of all Council meetings is given on the parish notice boards and on the website. Residents are encouraged to attend Council Meetings and time is set aside at all meetings for public participation. Parishioners are also actively encouraged to attend the Annual Parish Meeting, which is advertised as above.
- Surveys: Alvanley Parish Council will undertake surveys and other related forms of information gathering from time to time to ascertain the community's views on particular issues.
- Specific Projects: From time-to-time Alvanley Parish Council may undertake specific projects for the benefit of the community, wildflower/bulb planting, parish clean up etc. Working parties may be set up and parishioners are encouraged to participate and involve in these projects.

Where community engagement activities involve physical participation (e.g. clean-ups, planting, working parties), the Parish Council will ensure appropriate Health and Safety measures are in place, including risk assessments, supervision where necessary, and clear guidance for volunteers.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FORMAL REPRESENTATIONS TO THE COUNCIL

Representations to Alvanley Parish Council will normally be considered at the next meeting of the council. If, however, they require the provision of information only, then the clerk will provide it directly to the enquirer. The Parish Council has a Code of Practice for handling complaints, which is available from the Clerk, published on the website and reviewed regularly. The publication of agendas on the Parish Council's notice boards and website gives parishioners the opportunity to make representation to the council before agenda items are discussed. All formal representations received are responded to in writing.

INVOLVEMENT IN PARTNERSHIPS

Alvanley Parish Council is committed to partnership working where it is clear that it will be of benefit to the parish or to fulfil its statutory requirements. **ROLE OF COUNCIL MEMBERS AND OFFICERS IN CONSULTATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Councillors are powerful advocates for their community and their leadership role enables them to have a major input into the consultation and engagement process.

Alvanley Parish Councillors are very accessible:

- Their contact details are published on the website.
- They are available to talk to residents during the public sessions of each council meeting and at the Annual Parish Meeting.
- In a private capacity, they belong to many other local clubs, societies and organisations, where they may, if they so wish promote the work of the Parish Council and be available to parishioners.

Officers of the Council will endeavour to answer and address any concerns or queries raised by members of the public. They will also support and guide residents through the appropriate procedures for engaging with the council and councillors.



Co-option Policy and Procedure Introduction

This procedure is based on NALC Legal Briefing L15-08 – Good practice for selection of candidates for co option to local Councils.

Insufficiency of candidates at an ordinary election

Provided that those elected constitute at least a quorum (three) the council (e.g. those elected unopposed) may co-opt any person or persons to fill the vacancies within 35 working days. If this is not done within the timescale Cheshire West and Chester Council's (CWaC) returning officer may then exercise its powers to hold a further election or to take other appropriate action to fill the vacancies.

Casual vacancies

According to section 87 of the 1972 Act, a casual vacancy occurs when:

- a) a councillor fails to deliver their declaration of acceptance of office at the proper time
or
- b) a councillor resigns; or
- c) a councillor dies; or
- d) in the case of a councillor who is disqualified by virtue of a criminal conviction, under section 79 of the Local Government Act 2000 (Wales) or under section 34 of the Localism Act 2011 (England), the expiry of the period for making an application or appeal or, if an appeal or application has been made, the date that any such application or appeal process comes to an end.
- e) on the date of a report or certificate of an election court that declares an election void;
- f) a person ceases to be qualified to be a councillor for a reason not mentioned above; or
- g) a councillor fails to attend meetings for six consecutive months.

Parish Councils are permitted to exercise the power to co-opt a person on to the Council to fill a casual vacancy when the requirements to hold an election have not been met (i.e. The vacancy has been the subject of a public notice for fourteen working days and at least 10 registered electors have written to the returning officer requesting an election by the deadline date).

Procedure

Although seeking expressions of interest is not a legal requirement, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommends that Councils always give public notice of vacancies because this makes the process of co-option open and transparent and should attract more potential candidates.

Once a casual vacancy occurs, the Parish Clerk will inform the CWaC and the vacancy will be displayed publicly on Parish council noticeboards, website and social media giving the deadline date for requests for an election to be received by the CWaC returning officer.

If CWaC confirm that the requirements to hold an election are not met, the Parish Council will advertise the vacancy to seek and encourage expressions of interest of persons to be co-opted by a specified date from anyone living or working in the Parish or within 3 miles of its boundaries who is eligible to stand as a Parish Councillor.

Application process

1. Applicants are strongly advised to attend at least one Parish Council meeting as members of the public before applying to become a Councillor.
2. Applicant should also familiarise themselves with the following information:
 - the Good Councillor's Guide,
 - Standing Orders
 - The code of conduct
 - Financial Regulations
 - And the most recent minutes of the Council

All of which can be found on the Parish Council website:

www.alvanleyparishcouncil.gco.uk

3. The Clerk will send a copy of this policy or a link to it on the website, (which includes the co-option application form in Appendix B) to anyone who requests it.
4. Following receipt of applications, the next suitable Parish Council meeting will have an agenda item 'To receive written applications for the office of Parish Councillor and to co-opt a candidate to fill the existing vacancy/vacancies'.
If considered necessary, this can be held as private session at the end of all other business.
5. Copies of the eligible candidates' applications will be circulated to all parish councillors by the Clerk at least 3 clear days prior to the meeting of the full Parish Council, when the co-option will be considered.
6. All such documents will be treated by the Clerk and all parish councillors as strictly private and confidential and should be disposed of as soon as it is no longer required in line with UK GDPR.

At the meeting designated for a decision:

7. The Clerk will confirm that each candidate has signed and stated they are qualified to become a Councillor and is not disqualified from being a Councillor as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 s79 and s80.

8. Where the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of vacancies, the candidates shall then be appointed to the council if they meet the section 79 eligibility criteria and they are not disqualified.
9. Where the number of candidates is more than the number of vacancies, The Chair will offer the opportunity for debate on the order of priority to offer co-option.
10. The vote will be by a show of hands on the acceptability of each candidate for co-option, utilising the 'person specification' criteria set out in Appendix A and the expression of interest form completed by candidates; no other information about or from a candidate will be passed on to the meeting by the Clerk.
11. An absolute majority vote is required for each candidate from all members present and entitled to vote (LGA 1972 Sch. 12. Para 39 (50% + 1)) (The applicant with the least number of votes casted will be deleted and the vote taken again and again etc. until the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies)
12. A vote will then be taken to select the order in which acceptable candidates (decided by the vote at 11. above) should be approached to offer co-option on this occasion.
13. Following the meeting the Clerk or the Chair will contact and offer co-option to candidate(s), in the order of priority determined by the vote at 11. above.
14. If the first choice does not accept the post, then the second is to be approached and so on until the ranking list is exhausted.
15. The Clerk will then notify Electoral Services of the new Councillor appointment, initiate acceptance of office paperwork and registration of interest and organise amendment of the Parish Council website and records accordingly.
16. Assuming that the co-option position is filled, and all paperwork completed, the appointment will be formally ratified at the next Full Council meeting.
17. The Clerk will then organise a suitable training and development programme for the new councillor utilising suitable training such as recommended by GAPTC or NALC.
18. If no one accepts the vacant post(s), the whole process is to be repeated when new individuals expressing interest are identified. Advertisement may continue.

Appendix A: Co-Opted Councillor Person Specification Personal Attributes

All potential candidates will be requested to put their request for consideration by completing an application form (See Appendix B).

Competence	Required	Desirable
Personal attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community. • forward thinking • Motivated and enthusiastic 	Can bring new skills, expertise or key local knowledge to the Council
Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be contactable by phone and email. • Ability to listen constructively • A good team player • Ability to pick up and run with a variety of projects • Solid interest in local matters • Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community • Good interpersonal skills and able to contribute opinions at meetings whilst willing to see others views and accept majority decisions • Ability to communicate succinctly and clearly • Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff • Ability and willingness to work with the Council's partners (eg voluntary groups, other parish councils, principal authority, charities, etc) • Ability and willingness to undertake induction training and other relevant training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be literate in IT regarding use of social media and websites. • Experience of working or being a member in a local authority or other public body • Experience of working with voluntary and or local community/interest groups. • Basic knowledge of legal issues relating to town and parish councils or local authorities • Experience of delivering presentations.
Circumstances	Ability and willingness to attend meetings of the Council (or meetings of other local authorities and local bodies) at any time and events in the evening and at weekends.	

Appendix B –co-option application

Full Name:	
Address:	
Post Code:	
Telephone Number:	
Mobile Number:	
Email Address:	

Legal Qualifications for being a Parish Councillor

Please tick the appropriate criteria that you are claiming from the list below. If applicable you can claim as many of these criteria as possible to support your application.

Section 79 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act) provides, unless disqualified (see below) a person is qualified to be elected and to be a Councillor if he is a qualifying Commonwealth citizen or an EU citizen and on the day on which they are co-opted they are 18 years of age or over and:

- a) On that day they are and thereafter they continue to be a local government elector for the area of the authority; or
- b) They have during the whole of the 12 months preceding that day occupied as owner or tenant any land or premises in that area; or
- c) Their principal or only place of work during that 12 months has been in that area; or
- d) They have during the whole of those 12 months resided in that area; or
- e) in the case of a member of a parish or community council they have during the whole of those 12 months resided either in the parish or community or within three miles of it.

A person is a qualified Commonwealth citizen if they are a Commonwealth citizen who either:

- is not a person who requires leave under the Immigration Act 1971 (the 1971 Act) to enter and remain in the United Kingdom, or
- is such a person but for the time being has (or is, by virtue of any enactment, to be treated as having) indefinite leave to remain within the meaning of the 1971 Act.

A person is not a qualifying Commonwealth citizen if they do not require leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom by virtue only of section 9 of the 1971 Act (exceptions to requirement for leave in special cases)

With reference to c) above, a person is qualified for re-election under paragraph c) if they are already a Councillor.

Disqualifications for holding office as a Councillor.

In accordance with section 80 of the 1972 Act, a person is disqualified from being elected (coopted) or being a Councillor if they:

- a) hold any paid office or employment (other than the office of Chair, Vice Chair or Deputy Chair) to which they have been appointed by the council or any committee or sub committee of the council, or by a paid officer of the council, or by any joint committee on which the council is represented; or
- b) is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order, an interim bankruptcy restrictions order, a debt relief restrictions order or an interim debt relief restrictions order under schedule 4ZB of the Insolvency Act 1986; or
- c) has within five years before the day of election or since their election been convicted of any offence and sentenced to a term of imprisonment of at least three months (whether suspended or not) without the option of a fine; or
- d) has been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices, or was responsible for incurring unlawful expenditure and the court orders their disqualification.

In relation to a) above, when dealing with an office of profit, it is irrelevant that no profit was actually received.

Please give a brief narrative about yourself and outline why you are interested in being a Parish Councillor

Please tell us something about the skills and experience you feel you will bring to the Council, for example, professional qualifications, financial, event or project management expertise, previous local government experience, work in the voluntary or charitable sector, business experience etc.

Use of Personal Information

The Parish Council will use your information, including that which you provide on this application form, to assess your suitability to be a Parish Councillor. Your information will be held in confidence and not disclosed to third parties.

Declaration & Consent

I hereby confirm that I am eligible for the vacancy of Alvanley Parish Councillor and I am not disqualified under s80 of the Local Government Act 1972 from being a parish councillor and that the information given on this form is true and correct.

I have visited the Parish Council website and read the documents listed in Paragraph 2 of Alvanley Council Co-option Policy and Procedure.

I have read the section above entitled "Use of Personal Information" and by signing this form I consent to the use and disclosure of my information included in this form.

I understand that a Parish Councillor is a public position and therefore, should I be successful with this application, my Name, Image and possibly my contact details (email and telephone) may be made public on the Parish Council Website in order to properly fulfil my function.

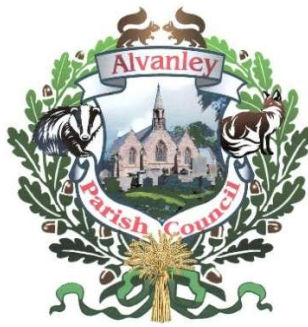
SIGNED..... NAME.....

DATE.....

Please return completed forms by email or post to:

parishclerk@alvanleyparishcouncil.co.uk

76 Oaklea Avenue
Hoole
Chester CH2 3RE



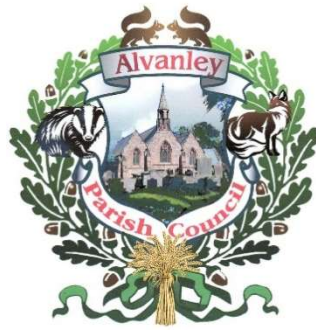
DATA RETENTION SCHEDULE

This schedule outlines the standard retention periods for records held by Alvanley Parish Council, in accordance with UK legislation and best practice.

Many documents are now only held electronically, so the same arrangements for keeping records and copies should be applied to an electronic document as for a paper document.

Document	Minimum retention period	Reason
Minute books	Indefinite	Archive
Scales of fees and charges	Six years	Management
Receipt and payment account(s)	Indefinite	Archive
Receipt books of all kinds	Six years	VAT
Bank statements, including deposit/savings accounts	Last completed audit year	Audit
Bank paying-in books	Last completed audit year	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Last completed audit year	Audit
Quotations and tenders	Six years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Paid invoices	Six years	VAT
Paid cheques	Six years	Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
VAT records	Six years generally but 20 years for VAT on rents	VAT
Petty cash, postage, and telephone books	Six years	Tax, VAT, and Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)

Timesheets	Three years (or last completed audit year)	Audit (requirement) and personal injury (best practice)
Wages books	12 years	Superannuation
Insurance policies	As long as a claim can be made under it	Management and legal proceedings
Certificates for Insurance against liability for employees	Indefinitely	Future claims
Investments	Indefinite	Audit and management
Title deeds, leases, agreements, contracts	Indefinite	Audit and management
Members allowances register	Six years	Tax and Limitation Act 1980 (as amended)
Correspondence (including emails)	1 year	Management



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

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Our commitment

The council is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination.

This policy is intended to assist the council to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment.

This policy applies to all employees, councillors, volunteers and anyone acting on behalf of the council.

The law

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality, caste and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as "protected characteristics".

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

The council will not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

Types of unlawful discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that they have a particular protected characteristic when they don't, in fact, have that protected characteristic.

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee, councillor or volunteer is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because they made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because they are suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if they acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

Equal opportunities in employment

The council will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

Recruitment

Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

Working practices

The council will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if the council considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. The council will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. The council will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

Equal opportunities monitoring

The council will monitor the ethnic, sex/gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

The council treats personal data collected for reviewing equality and diversity in accordance with the data protection policy. Information about how data is used and the basis for processing is provided in the council's privacy notices.

Dignity at work

The council has a separate dignity at work policy concerning issues of bullying and harassment on any ground, and how complaints of this type will be dealt with.

People not employed by the council

The council will not discriminate unlawfully against those using or seeking to use the services provided by the council.

You should report any bullying or harassment by suppliers, visitors or others to the council who will take appropriate action.

Training and prevention

The council will provide training in equal opportunities to those likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.

The council will provide training to all staff councillors and volunteers engaged to work at the council to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the dignity at work policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment. The council will provide additional training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.

We will take active steps to try to prevent third-party harassment of staff. If any third-party harassment of staff occurs, we will take steps to remedy any complaints and to prevent it happening again. Action may include warning the harasser about their behaviour, banning them from our premises, reporting any criminal acts to the police, and sharing information with other branches of the business.

Your responsibilities

Every employee councillor and volunteer is required to assist the council to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination. Employees, councillors, volunteers can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the council for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees, councillors or volunteers who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees, councillors, volunteers or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the council's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

Grievances

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you should use the council's grievance procedure to make a complaint. If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the dignity at work policy.

The council will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

Monitoring and review

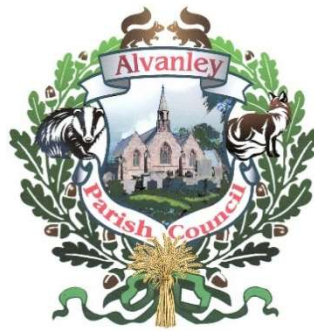
This policy will be monitored periodically by the council to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law. In particular, the council will monitor the treatment and outcomes of any complaints of harassment, sexual harassment or victimisation we receive to ensure that they are properly investigated and resolved, those who report or act as witnesses are not victimised, repeat offenders are dealt with appropriately, cultural clashes are identified and resolved and workforce training is targeted where needed; the ethnic and gender composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups, and will review its equal opportunities policy in accordance with the results shown by the monitoring . If changes are required, the council will implement them.

Information provided by job applicants and employees for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with relevant data protection legislation.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Approved:

Next Review Date:



FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

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These Financial Regulations were adopted by the council at its meeting held on

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 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;
- authorise any grant or single commitment in excess of £2,000;

2. Risk management and internal control

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

2.2. The Clerk 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.

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

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

2.5. **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.**

2.6. At least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chair shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign and date the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of this. This activity, including any exceptions, shall be reported to and noted by the council.

- 2.7. 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

- 3.1. All accounting procedures and financial records of the council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 3.2. **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;**
- 3.3. The accounting records shall be designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of the accounting statements in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.
- 3.4. 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.
- 3.5. **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.**
- 3.6. **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.
- 3.7. The internal auditor shall be appointed by [the council] 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.
- 3.8. 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

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

- perform any operational duties for the council;
- initiate or approve accounting transactions;
- provide financial, legal or other advice including in relation to any future transactions; or
- direct the activities of any council employee, except to the extent that such employees have been appropriately assigned to assist the internal auditor.

3.10. 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.

3.11. 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.

3.12. The RFO shall, without undue delay, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from internal or external auditors.

4. Budget and precept

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

4.2. Budgets for salaries and wages, including employer contributions shall be reviewed by the council at least annually in October 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.

4.3. No later than December each year, the RFO shall prepare a draft budget with detailed estimates of all receipts and payments for the following financial year along with a forecast for the following three financial years, taking account of the lifespan of assets and cost implications of repair or replacement.

4.4. Unspent budgets for completed projects shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year. Unspent funds for partially completed projects may only be carried forward by placing them in an earmarked reserve with the formal approval of the full council.

4.5. The draft budget with three-year forecast, including any recommendations for the use or accumulation of reserves, shall be considered by the council.

4.6. Having considered the proposed budget and three-year forecast, 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.

- 4.7. **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 disclose at the start of the meeting that Section 106 applies to them.**
- 4.8. 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.
- 4.9. The agreed budget provides a basis for monitoring progress during the year by comparing actual spending and income against what was planned.
- 4.10. Any addition to, or withdrawal from, any earmarked reserve shall be agreed by the council.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. **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 several suppliers.
- 5.2. The RFO should verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before it is made and in the case of new or infrequent purchases, should ensure that the legal power being used is reported to the meeting at which the order is authorised and also recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3. Every contract shall comply with the council's Standing Orders and these Financial Regulations and no exceptions shall be made, except in an emergency.
- 5.4. **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.**
- 5.5. **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.**
- 5.6. For contracts greater than £3,000 excluding VAT the Clerk shall seek at least 3 fixed-price quotes;
- 5.7. where the value is between £500 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.
- 5.8. For smaller purchases, the clerk shall seek to achieve value for money.
- 5.9. **Contracts must not be split to avoid compliance with these rules.**
- 5.10. 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.

5.11. 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. Avoidance of competition is not a valid reason.

5.12. The council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

5.13. Individual purchases within an agreed budget for that type of expenditure may be authorised by:

- the Clerk, under delegated authority, for any items below £500 excluding VAT.
- the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Council, for any items below £1,000 excluding VAT.

Such authorisation must be supported by a minute of the council.

5.14. 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.

5.15. No expenditure may be authorised that will exceed the budget for that type of expenditure other than by resolution of the council or a duly delegated committee acting within its Terms of Reference except in an emergency.

5.16. 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 £500 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 as soon as practicable thereafter.

5.17. No expenditure shall be authorised, no contract entered into or tender accepted in relation to any major project, unless [the council] is satisfied that the necessary funds are available and that where a loan is required, Government borrowing approval has been obtained first.

5.18. An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services above £250 excluding VAT unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained, along with evidence of receipt of goods.

5.19. Any ordering system can be misused and access to them shall be controlled by the RFO.

6. Banking and payments

- 6.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and authorised by the council; banking arrangements shall not be delegated to a committee. The council has resolved to bank with Natwest Bank. The arrangements shall be reviewed annually for security and efficiency.
- 6.2. 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. Even where a purchase has been authorised, the payment must also be authorised and only authorised payments shall be approved or signed to allow the funds to leave the council's bank.
- 6.3. 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 and represent expenditure previously authorised by the council before being certified by the RFO.
- 6.4. 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.
- 6.5. All payments shall be made by online banking, in accordance with a resolution of the council, unless the council resolves to use a different payment method.
- 6.6. For each financial year the RFO may draw up a schedule of regular payments due in relation to a continuing contract or obligation (such as Salaries, PAYE, National Insurance, pension contributions, rent, rates, regular maintenance contracts and similar items), which the council may authorise in advance for the year.
- 6.7. A list of such payments shall be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the council for information only.
- 6.8. The Clerk shall have delegated authority to authorise payments only in the following circumstances:
 - i. any payments of up to £500 excluding VAT, within an agreed budget.
 - ii. 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 certifies 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.
 - iii. Fund transfers within the councils banking arrangements up to the sum of £2,000, provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council.
- 6.9. The RFO shall present a schedule of payments requiring authorisation, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, together with the relevant invoices, to the council. The council shall review the schedule for compliance and, having satisfied itself,

shall authorise payment by resolution. The authorised schedule shall be initialled immediately below the last item by the person chairing the meeting. A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of that meeting.

7. Electronic payments

- 7.1. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify two 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.
- 7.2. All authorised signatories shall have access to view the council's bank accounts online.
- 7.3. 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.
- 7.4. The Service Administrator shall set up all items due for payment online. A list of payments for approval, together with copies of the relevant invoices, shall be sent by email to two authorised signatories.
- 7.5. In the prolonged absence of the Service Administrator an authorised signatory shall set up any payments due before the return of the Service Administrator.
- 7.6. Two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.
- 7.7. A full list of all payments made in a month shall be provided to the next council meeting and appended to the minutes.
- 7.8. With the approval of the council in each case, regular payments (such as gas, electricity, telephone, broadband, water, National Non-Domestic Rates, refuse collection, pension contributions and HMRC payments) may be made by variable direct debit, provided that the instructions are signed/approved online by two authorised members. The approval of the use of each variable direct debit shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.
- 7.9. Payment may be made by BACS or CHAPS by resolution of the council provided that each payment is approved online by two authorised bank signatories, evidence is retained and any payments are reported to the council at the next meeting. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years.
- 7.10. If thought appropriate by the council, regular payments of fixed sums may be made by banker's standing order, provided that the instructions are signed or approved online by two members, evidence of this is retained and any payments are reported to council when made. The approval of the use of a banker's standing order shall be reviewed by the council at least every two years.

- 7.11. Account details for suppliers may only be changed upon written notification by the supplier verified by two of the Clerk and a member. This is a potential area for fraud and the individuals involved should ensure that any change is genuine. Data held should be checked with suppliers every two years.
- 7.12. 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.
- 7.13. Remembered password facilities other than secure password stores requiring separate identity verification should not be used on any computer used for council banking.

8. Payment cards

- 8.1. Any Debit Card issued for use will be specifically restricted to the Clerk and will also be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £500 unless authorised by council or finance committee in writing before any order is placed.
- 8.2. A pre-paid debit card may be issued to employees with varying limits. These limits will be set by [the council]. Transactions and purchases made will be reported to [the council] and authority for topping-up shall be at the discretion of [the council].
- 8.3. Any corporate credit card or trade card account opened by the council will be specifically restricted to use by the Clerk and any balance shall be paid in full each month.
- 8.4. Personal credit or debit cards of members or staff shall not be used except for expenses of up to £250 including VAT, incurred in accordance with council policy.

9. Payment of salaries and allowances

- 9.1. **As an employer, the council must make arrangements to comply with the statutory requirements of PAYE legislation.**
- 9.2. **Councillors allowances (where paid) are also liable to deduction of tax under PAYE rules and must be taxed correctly before payment.**
- 9.3. Salary rates shall be agreed by the council, or a duly delegated 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 relevant committee.
- 9.4. 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.
- 9.5. 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.
- 9.6. 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. Payroll reports will be reviewed by Clerk to ensure that the correct payments have been made.

9.7. Any termination payments shall be supported by a report to the council, setting out a clear business case. Termination payments shall only be authorised by the full council.

9.8. Before employing interim staff, the council must consider a full business case.

10. Loans and investments

10.1. Any application for Government approval to borrow money and subsequent arrangements for a loan must be authorised by the full council and recorded in the minutes. All borrowing shall be in the name of the council, after obtaining any necessary approval.

10.2. Any financial arrangement which does not require formal borrowing approval from the Secretary of State (such as Hire Purchase, Leasing of tangible assets or loans to be repaid within the financial year) must be authorised by the full council, following a written report on the value for money of the proposed transaction.

10.3. The council shall consider the requirement for an Investment Strategy and Policy in accordance with Statutory Guidance on Local Government Investments, which must be written in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Strategy and Policy shall be reviewed by the council at least annually.

10.4. All investment of money under the control of the council shall be in the name of the council.

10.5. All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

10.6. 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.

11. Income

11.1. The collection of all sums due to the council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.

11.2. The council will review all fees and charges for work done, services provided, or goods sold at least annually as part of the budget-setting process, following a report of the Clerk. The RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all amounts due to the council.

11.3. 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.

11.4. 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.

11.5. Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the council.

11.6. Any repayment claim under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994 shall be made at least annually at the end of the financial year.

12. Assets, properties and estates

- 12.1. The Clerk shall make arrangements for the safe custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the council.
- 12.2. 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.
- 12.3. 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.
- 12.4. 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).
- 12.5. 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 £500. In each case a written report shall be provided to council with a full business case.

13. Insurance

- 13.1. 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.
- 13.2. The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the RFO of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 13.3. The RFO shall be notified of any loss, liability, damage or event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to the council at the next available meeting. The RFO shall negotiate all claims on the council's insurers.
- 13.4. 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 annually by the council, or duly delegated committee.

14. Suspension and revision of Financial Regulations

- 14.1. The council shall review these Financial Regulations annually and following any change of clerk or RFO. The Clerk shall monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and advise the council of any need to amend these Financial Regulations.

- 14.2. 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.
- 14.3. 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.



ALVANLEY PARISH COUNCIL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) AND EMAIL USE POLICY

1. Introduction

Alvanley Parish Council (“the Council”) relies on secure and effective information technology to support its operations, decision-making, and communication. This policy sets out the standards, responsibilities, and procedures for the appropriate use of IT systems, devices, data, and email by councillors, employees, volunteers, and contractors (“users”).

The aims of this policy are to:

- protect the Council’s information and systems
- ensure compliance with legal and regulatory obligations
- promote safe, responsible, and professional use of technology

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who access or use:

- Council-owned computers, phones, tablets, and other devices
- personal devices used for Council business (BYOD)
- Council email accounts
- Council data, documents, and digital records
- Council-funded software, cloud services, and online platforms

All users must comply with this policy to maintain digital security and protect personal data.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Council

- Provides approved devices, software, and secure storage solutions where possible
- Ensures policies and procedures are in place
- Reviews this policy annually

The Clerk

- Acts as the primary IT contact
- Maintains Council accounts, email systems, and access permissions
- Ensures backups and data retention processes are followed
- Coordinates responses to Freedom of Information (FOI) and Subject Access Requests (SARs)

Data Protection Officer (DPO The Council)

- Provides guidance on GDPR compliance
- Advises on data breaches and reporting obligations

All Users

- Follow this policy and all related procedures
- Protect Council data and devices
- Report incidents promptly
- Use Council systems professionally and responsibly

4. Training and Awareness

The Council will provide or signpost regular training, including:

- National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) Cyber Security Training for Small Organisations
- NCSC Cyber Action Toolkit
- Email security and phishing awareness

Users are expected to engage with training and keep their knowledge up to date.

5. Acceptable Use of Council IT Resources

When using Council-owned devices or systems, users must:

- use them only for legitimate Council business
- comply with copyright and intellectual property law
- use only authorised software and applications
- keep devices secure and report faults promptly
- avoid accessing, storing, or forwarding inappropriate or offensive content

Users must not install software or apps without approval from the Clerk.

6. Use of Personal Devices (BYOD)

Where personal devices are used for Council business, users must:

- use strong, unique passwords (preferably via a password manager)
- keep operating systems and apps updated
- use reputable anti-virus software

- ensure devices are protected by a screen lock
- avoid shared family devices for Council work
- store Council data only in approved locations (e.g., Council-managed cloud storage)

If a user leaves the Council, all Council data must be deleted from personal devices.

7. Network and Internet Usage

Users must:

- avoid public or unsecured Wi-Fi for Council business
- use trusted, password-protected networks
- use a VPN if accessing sensitive information remotely (where provided)

8. Password and Account Security

Users must:

- follow NCSC guidance for creating strong passwords
- never share passwords with others
- store emergency access details securely for business continuity
- use multi-factor authentication (MFA) where available

The Clerk may hold sealed access credentials for emergency use only.

9. Email Communication

The Council will provide official email accounts for all councillors and staff.

Users must:

- use Council email accounts for all Council business
- maintain a professional and respectful tone
- check recipients carefully before sending sensitive information
- be cautious with attachments and links
- verify suspicious emails before opening them

Personal email accounts used for Council business remain subject to FOI (Freedom of Information) , SAR (Subject Access Request) and GDPR obligations.

10. Email and Account Access

The Council reserves the right to access Council email accounts:

- to ensure compliance with this policy
- to respond to FOI or SAR requests
- for business continuity

Any monitoring will comply with the Data Protection Act and GDPR.

11. Data Storage, Retention, and Security

Users must:

- store Council data only in approved locations (e.g., OneDrive, SharePoint)
- avoid storing Council data on personal hard drives or USB sticks unless encrypted
- follow the Council's Data Retention Schedule
- archive or delete emails in line with retention requirements
- ensure regular backups are completed (managed by the Clerk)

Sensitive or confidential data must be encrypted when stored or transmitted.

12. Use of Messaging Apps and Social Media

Council business must not be conducted via:

- Facebook Messenger
- SMS
- Personal social media accounts

These platforms are not compliant with GDPR for official communications.

13. Starters, Leavers, and Change of Role

When a user joins the Council

- accounts and access permissions will be created
- training will be provided

When a user leaves the Council

- Council devices must be returned
- Council email accounts will be closed
- all Council data must be removed from personal devices
- access permissions will be revoked

14. Reporting Security Incidents

Users must immediately report:

- suspected data breaches
- lost or stolen devices
- suspicious emails or malware
- unauthorised access to accounts or systems

Reports should be made to: The Clerk of the Parish Council

The Clerk and DPO will assess whether the ICO must be notified.

15. Compliance and Consequences

Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- suspension of IT access
- referral to the Monitoring Officer
- disciplinary action (for employees)

Serious breaches may result in legal consequences under GDPR or other legislation.

16. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- legislation changes
- new risks emerge
- new systems or technologies are introduced

17. Contacts

For IT support or queries: [insert name/role]

For data protection matters: The Clerk of the Parish Council

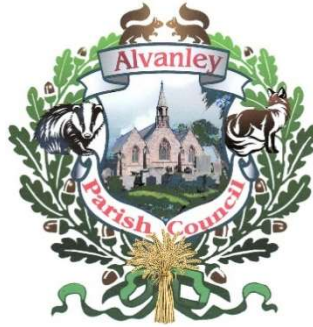
Alvanley Parish Council

Information Technology (IT) and Email Use Policy**

Adopted: _____

Minute Reference: _____

Next Review Date: _____



TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

1. Introduction

Alvanley Parish Council is committed to ensuring that its clerk and councillors are provided with the training they require to ensure they can carry out their duties to the best of their abilities and are up to date with all current legislation. The council recognises that the most important resource is its staff and councillors and is committed to encouraging the enhancement of their knowledge and qualifications through appropriate training and development.

A training budget is allocated to enable attendance at any relevant training and conferences throughout the year.

2. Policy Statement

The clerk is responsible for either procuring or, occasionally providing, the necessary training to ensure that everybody is suitably equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to fulfil their duties to the parish and residents.

3. Membership of County Association and SLCC

The council will retain membership of the Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC) and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) in order that all training opportunities can be accessed.

4. Training and Development Activity

All councillors will be:

- issued with a link to an induction pack which includes copies of the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct, policies of the council and any other information which is deemed relevant;
- given an electronic copy of NALC's Good Councillor Guides;
- e-mailed all updates and newsletters which the clerk receives and deems relevant;
- certain training is encourage for all councillors and staff to carry out at the start of their role, including Code of Conduct, Role and Responsibilities induction training, GDPR, and financial governance training and also periodically (every four years) throughout their term of office to ensure they are kept up-to-date with any changes.

(Any Parish Councillors not wishing to undertake training will be asked not to represent the Parish Council on external committees.)

- circulated any other training course details which may enhance their position.

The chair and vice chair are also encouraged to attend ChALC's Chairmanship training course upon their election and acceptance to office.

The clerk/RFO will be:

- provided with a contract of employment setting out clear objectives and expectations; receive an employment and salary review annually from the council;
- encouraged to attend all relevant ChALC and SLCC clerks' training courses including the Roles and Responsibilities Course, induction training, GDPR, and financial governance training;
- encouraged to gain ILCA (Introduction to Local Council Administration) (Level 2);
- encouraged to gain the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) (Level 3);
- undertake any other training relevant to the proficient discharge of their duties such as IT, legal powers, finance and planning which is identified through regular training needs assessments;
- encouraged to attend relevant local meetings such as clerk's forums and briefings; able to subscribe to relevant publications and advice services including the SLCC and NALC;
- provided with all relevant publications such as the Local Council Administration reference book and the SLCC Clerks' Manual;
- given regular feedback from the chair of the council on their performance;
- entitled to paid study leave in order to work towards the qualifications.

5. Training Needs Identification

Training requirements for councillors will usually be identified by themselves, the chair and clerk. Opportunities to attend courses will be investigated by the clerk and brought to the attention of the full council.

Training needs for the clerk will be identified through the recruitment process for new clerks, including application form and interview, formal and informal discussions, annual staff appraisal and changes in legislation.

The clerk is expected to keep up-to-date with developments in the sector and highlight to the council any training required.

6. Resourcing Training

A review will be undertaken annually during the budget process to ascertain any weaknesses or potential areas of improvement that the parish council could enhance through training. Budgets will be put in place and agreed to cover training courses, annual subscriptions and purchasing of relevant publications.

7. Evaluation and Review of Training

The clerk will maintain an updated training record for all councillors and the clerk. Following attending any training the person who attended will report back to the council on the relevance and effectiveness of the training supplied.

Adoption Date:

Last Reviewed Date:

Next Review Date:

ChALC Virtual Training Schedule 2026

For the calendar of dates and details of individual session outlines please scroll down this document

Programme Details:

To support councils' development needs, ChALC aims to provide a rolling programme of our core training offer throughout the year. We also have some national partners who provide training sessions. Set out on the pages below are the schedule calendars for 2026 for ChALC and our partners listing the session name, dates, times and length of session. Full details can be found in later pages.

Please note that from time to time we will ask external trainers to provide ad hoc sessions for ChALC on more specific subjects to enhance the learning offer. These will be listed, and the schedule updated, as they become available.

Providers and relevant course dates are colour coded as follows: -

Trainer	Session Cost	Trainer	Session Cost	Trainer	Session Cost
ChALC	£25 member £40 non-member	Parkinson Partnership	£35 member £50 non-member		
Trainer	Session Cost	Trainer	Session Cost	Trainer	Session Cost
CCA	FREE for ChALC members	Breakthrough Communications	£30 member £45 non-member	CloudyIT	From £45
Trainer	Session Cost				

N.B. All sessions listed will be VIRTUAL unless specified. Please check course availability and make a booking by contacting sharonangus-crawshaw@chalc.org.uk or nikkiroberts@chalc.org.uk

Cancellation Policy - if you find yourself unable to attend any session please contact Nikkiroberts@chalc.org.uk or sharonangus-crawshaw@chalc.org.uk immediately. Bookings cancelled with less than 48 hours notice or 'no shows' will be charged at the full price advertised. Extenuating circumstances will be considered but must be advised as soon as possible.

CHALC TRAINING CALENDAR

JANUARY 2026			FEBRUARY 2026			MARCH 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
			10 th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Induction for councillors and clerks	10 th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Roles and Responsibilities
			12 th	1.00pm – 3.00pm	Induction for councillors and clerks	12 th	10.00am – 12pm	Roles and Responsibilities
APRIL 2026			MAY 2026			JUNE 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
21 st	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Meetings and Procedures	5 th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Chairmanship	9 th	6.30pm- 8.00pm	CEC Code of Conduct
23 rd	1.00pm – 3.00pm	Meetings and Procedures	7 th	1.00pm – 3.00pm	Chairmanship	18 th	6.30pm – 8.00pm	Warrington Code of Conduct
						23 rd	6.30pm – 8.00pm	CW&C Code of Conduct

JULY 2026			AUGUST 2026			SEPTEMBER 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
7th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Induction for councillors and clerks				8th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Roles and Responsibilities
16th	10.00am – 12pm	Induction for councillors and clerks				10th	1.00pm - 3.00pm	Roles and Responsibilities
OCTOBER 2026			NOVEMBER 2026			DECEMBER 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
20th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Meetings and Procedures	17th	6.30pm – 8.00pm	CEC Code of Conduct	15th	6.30pm – 8.30pm	Chairmanship
22nd	10.00am – 12pm	Meetings and Procedures	19th	6.30pm – 8.00pm	Warrington Code of Conduct	17th	10.00am	Chairmanship
			24th	6.30pm - 8.00pm	CW&C Code of Conduct			

Why not try one of these ChALC webinars?

[Introduction to Project Planning for Local Councils](#) - This short overview is intended for those who think they would like to develop a project but don't quite know how or where to start. Cost £5

[Local Council Award Scheme](#) - Watch this 15-minute session to talk you through the Local Council Award Scheme (LCAS); what it is, what is involved, and why your council should consider doing it. FREE

MARCH 2026			APRIL 2026			MAY 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
3 rd	10.00am – 11.30am	New Clerks Finance	14 th	10.00am – 11.30am	VAT Partial Exemption	6 th	10.00am – 11.30am	Internal Controls
4 th	10.00am – 11.30am	Internal Controls	16 th	10.00am – 11.30am	Introduction to VAT (free)	7 th	10.00am – 1.30am	New Clerks Finance
10 th	10.00am – 11.30am	Year End & Audit (Councils over £25k)	23 rd	10.00am – 11.30am	Procurement Act 2023	19 th	10.00am – 11.30am	Introduction to VAT (free)
12 th	10.00am – 11.30am	Year end and Transparency (Councils under £25k)	28 th	10.00- 11.30am	Finance for Councillors	21 st	6.30pm – 8.00pm	Finance for Councillors
17 th	10.00am – 11.30am	Year end and Transparency (Councils under £25k)						
19 th	10.00am – 11.30am	Income and Expenditure Accounts (for larger councils)						
26 th	10.00am – 11.30am	Year End & Audit (Councils over £25k)						
JUNE 2026			JULY 2026			AUGUST 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
2 nd	10.00am – 11.30am	Procurement	2 nd	10.00am - 11.30am	VAT Partial Exemption			
3 rd	10.00am – 11.30am	Role of Internal Audit	16 th	10.00am – 11.30am	Procurement			
4 th	10.00am – 11.30am	Finance for Councillors						
17 th	10.00am – 11.30am	Internal Controls						



OTHER EXTERNAL PROVIDER TRAINING SESSIONS

APRIL 2026			MAY 2026			JUNE 2026		
Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session	Date	Time	Session
21 st	10am – 11.00am	Social Value for Town and Parish Councils (FREE)						
28 th	6.30pm – 7.30pm	Social Value for Town and Parish Councils (FREE)						



What is Social Value?

Social value is the positive difference your activities make — from improved wellbeing and reduced isolation, to stronger communities, new skills, and reduced pressure on public services. It's not just about what you deliver. It's about what changes as a result.



ALVANLEY PARISH COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR – LEAD/DUTIES/ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES

To discuss and agreed roles and responsibility leads for the year 2026-27:-

Bank signatories – Cllr Hughes, Cllr Gilbert

Communications – Church Newsletter – Cllr Crowe

Alvanley and Manley Primary School – Governor - Cllr Crowe

Litterpicking – Cllr Crowe

Planning - All Parish Councillors

Website – Cllr Mahoney

ANY OTHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES?