

SHINCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

December 2008

STANDING ORDERS FOR SHINCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

1. Normally held immediately before the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.
2. After the Minutes of the previous Annual Meeting have been agreed and signed the order of business shall be as follows:-
 - a. to receive the Annual Report of the Parish Council
 - b. to receive a statement of the Parish Council accounts for the year ended the previous March.
 - c. to receive the Council's observations on its finances for the current year.
 - d. to receive the Annual Report of the person appointed by the Council to be a School Governor.
 - e. to receive the observations of the County Councillor and District Councillor for the Division.
 - f. to consider resolutions of which written notice has been given.
 - g. to deal with any other business.
 - h. to consider matters brought to the Meeting by members of the public.

ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISH COUNCIL

3. The statutory Annual Meeting (a) in an Election year shall be held on the Tuesday next following the fourth day after the ordinary day of elections to the Council and (b) in a year which is not an election year shall be held in May.
4. Proceedings shall not begin before 6.00 pm.
5. After Minutes have been signed (with the previous Chairperson presiding) the order of business at the Parish Meeting shall be as follows:-
 - a. to elect a Chairperson for the current year.
 - b. to elect a Vice-Chairperson.
 - c. to appoint a School Governor if appropriate.
 - d. to appoint Committees.
 - e. any other business.

ALL MEETINGS

6. Proceedings shall be held at a time and place determined by the Council.
7. At least three clear days notice must be given before a meeting of the Parish Council. A notice specifying the time and place of meeting must be affixed in some conspicuous place in the Parish or Community and a summons sent to each Member.
8. The Chairperson of the Council, if present, shall preside.

9. If the Chairperson is absent the Vice-Chairperson shall preside.
10. If the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are absent the meeting shall appoint a Chairperson before it proceeds to conduct any other business.
11. The Clerk, if present shall record the proceedings of Parish meetings.
12. If the Clerk is absent the person presiding at the meeting may record the proceedings or may appoint another to do so.
13. As soon as the Chair has been filled and provision made for recording the proceedings the Minutes of the previous meeting shall be read, considered and if correct, signed by the person presiding at the meeting.

14. CHAIRPERSON OF MEETING

The person presiding at the meeting may exercise all the powers and duties of the Chairperson in relation to the conduct of the Meeting.

15. QUORUM

Three Members shall constitute a quorum.

If a quorum is not present when the Council meet or if during a meeting the number of Councillors present and not debarred by reason of a declared pecuniary interest falls below the quorum, the business not transacted at that meeting shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Chairperson may fix.

16. VOTING

Members shall vote by show of hands, or, if at least two Members so request, by secret ballot.

If a Member so requires, the Clerk shall record the names of the Members who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it.

Subject to below the Chairperson may be given an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes, may give a casting vote even though he/she gave no original vote.

If the person presiding at the Annual Meeting would have ceased to be a Member of the Council but for the statutory provisions which preserve the membership of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson until the end of their term of office, he/she may not give an original vote in an election of Chairperson.

The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Chairperson.

17. AGENDA

After the meeting has been opened, the order of business, unless the Council otherwise decides on the ground of urgency, shall be as follows:-

- a. To receive apologies
- b. To receive and consider the Minutes of the previous meeting, provided that a copy has been circulated to each Member not later than the day of issue of the summons to attend the meeting, the Minutes may be taken as read.
- c. To receive and consider Minutes of any Sub-Committees.
- d. After consideration, to approve the Minutes and authorise the signing of the Minutes by the person presiding as a correct record.
- e. To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.
- f. Matters arising from the above Minutes.
- g. Correspondence:
 - i) Matters arising from correspondence previously circulated
 - ii) Correspondence to be circulated.
 - iii) Discussion on current correspondence
- h. Planning Applications.
- i. Accounts
- j. Date of next Meeting.
- k. Any other business. Items may be raised for discussion by Members under A.O.B., or by the giving of a preliminary notification of important business for next time.
- l. The Chairperson shall invite, from the public, any items for discussion.

18. RESOLUTIONS MOVED ON NOTICE

Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no resolution may be moved unless the business to which it relates has been put on the Agenda by the Clerk or the mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Clerk at least 7 clear days before that meeting of the Council.

The Clerk shall date every notice of resolution or recommendation when received, and shall number each notice in the order in which it was received and shall enter it in a book which shall be open to the inspection of every Member of the Council.

The Clerk shall insert in the summons for every meeting all notices of recommendation properly given in the order in which they have been received unless the Member giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that he intends to move at some later meeting or that he withdraws it.

Every resolution or recommendation shall be relevant to some subject over which the Council has power or which affects its area.

19. RESOLUTIONS MOVED WITHOUT NOTICE

- To appoint a Chairperson of the Meeting.
- To correct the Minutes.
- To approve the Minutes.
- To alter the order of business.
- To proceed to the next business.
- To close or adjourn the debate.
- To refer a matter to a Committee.
- To appoint a Committee or any Members thereof.
- To adopt a report.
- To amend a resolution.
- To give leave to withdraw a resolution or an amendment.
- To exclude the public.
- To silence or eject from the meeting a Member named for misconduct.
- To invite a Member having an interest in the subject matter under debate to remain.
- To suspend any Standing Order.
- To adjourn the meeting.

20. DISORDERLY CONDUCT

- (a) No Member shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairperson, wilfully obstruct business, or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly or in such a manner as to scandalise the Council or bring it into contempt or ridicule.
- (b) If, in the opinion of the Chairperson, a Member has broken the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Order, the Chairperson shall express that opinion to the Council and thereafter any Member may move that the Member named be no longer heard or that the Member named do leave the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.
- (c) If either of the motions mentioned in paragraph (b) is disobeyed, the Chairperson may suspend the meeting or take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce them.
- (d) If a Member of the public attending a meeting behaves in a disorderly fashion as described in (a) above the Chairperson may, after due warning ask that person to leave the meeting or if necessary suspend the meeting.

21. VOTING OF APPOINTMENTS

Where more than two persons have been nominated for any position to be filled by the Council and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken, and so on until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.

22. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

The Council may at its Annual Meeting appoint standing Committees and may at any other time appoint such other Committees as are necessary, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf:-

- a. shall not appoint any Member of a Committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting;
- b. may appoint persons other than Members of the Council to any Committee;

- c. may at any time dissolve or alter the membership of a Committee.

23. INTERESTS

If any Member has any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, within the meaning of Sections 94-95 of the Local Government Act 1972, in any contract, proposed contract or other matter, he shall, while it is under consideration by the Council, withdraw from the meeting unless the interest is trivial in the manner described in Section 97(5) or:-

- a. the disability imposed upon him/her by those sections has been removed by the District Council; or
- b. The Council invite him/her to remain.

If any Member has a non-pecuniary interest within the ambit of the National Code of Local Government Conduct, he/she shall declare it and withdraw from the meeting unless invited to remain.

24. INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

A Member may for the purpose of his duty as such (but not otherwise), inspect any document in possession of the Council or a Committee, and if copies are available shall, on request, be supplied for the like purpose with a copy.

25. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Parish Council has a publication scheme, which is a guide for the general public about the information held and published by the Council and its availability.

26. UNAUTHORISED ACTIVITIES

No Member of the Council or of any Committee or Sub-Committee shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council:-

- a. inspect any lands or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
- b. issue orders, instructions or directions unless authorised to do so by the Council.

27. ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS TO MEETINGS

The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committee. However, they may be temporarily excluded from these meetings if the following resolution is passed:-

“That in view of the (special) (confidential) nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.”

The Clerk shall afford to the press reasonable facilities for taking their report of any proceedings which are open to the public. Where the Chairperson or Members wish to request information from members of the public attending meetings, the meeting may be adjourned to allow public participation.

28. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

No Member of the Council shall disclose to any person not a Member of the Council any business declared to be confidential by the Council.

29. LIAISON WITH COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

A notice of Meeting may be sent together with an invitation to attend to the County Councillor for the division or to the District Councillor for the Ward as the case may require.

30. CODE OF CONDUCT ON COMPLAINTS

The Council shall deal with complaints of maladministration allegedly committed by the Council or by any Officer or Member in the manner recommended in Circular 2/86 issued by the National Association of Local Councils.

31. VARIATION, REVOCATION AND SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Any or every part of the Standing Orders may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

A resolution permanently to add, vary, or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary Meeting of the Council.

32. PLENARY POWERS

The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be authorised to deal with any Planning Applications and to authorise payment of invoices during the recess or if considered urgent. Details of action taking under these plenary powers are to be reported to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

33. RESCISSION OF PRECEDING RESOLUTION

No motion to rescind any resolution passed within the preceding six months, shall be proposed unless supported by at least four Members of the Council. When any such motion or amendment has been disposed of by the Council, it shall not be open to any Member to propose a similar motion within a further period of six months.

34. STANDING ORDERS TO BE GIVEN TO MEMBERS

A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each Member by the Clerk upon delivery of the Member's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

APPENDIX 1

SHINCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on Tuesday 16th October 2007.

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council. The Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that the council has a sound system of financial control which facilitates the effective exercise of the council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk and for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption. These financial regulations are designed to demonstrate how the council meets these responsibilities.
- 1.2 The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is a statutory office and shall be appointed by the Council. Shincliffe Parish Council has appointed the Clerk as the RFO for the Council and these regulations will apply accordingly. The Clerk, acting under the policy direction of the Council, shall administer the Council's financial affairs in accordance with proper practices. The Clerk shall determine on behalf of the council its accounting records, and accounting control systems. The Clerk shall ensure that the accounting control systems are followed and that the accounting records of the Council are maintained and kept up to date in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.3 The Clerk shall produce financial management information as required by the Council.
- 1.4 At least once a year, prior to approving the annual return, the Council shall conduct a review of the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.5 In these financial regulations, references to the Accounts and Audit Regulations shall mean the Regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and then in force.
- 1.6 In these financial regulations the term 'proper practice' or 'proper practices' shall refer to guidance issued in Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales – a Practitioners' Guide which is published jointly by NALC and SLCC and updated from time to time.

2. ANNUAL ESTIMATES (BUDGET)

- 2.1 Each Committee (if any) shall formulate and submit proposals to the Council in respect of revenue and capital including the use of reserves and sources of funding for the following financial year not later than the end of November each year.
- 2.2 Detailed estimates of all receipts and payments including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the year shall be prepared each year by the Clerk in the form of a budget to be considered by the council.

2.3 The Council shall review the budget not later than the end of January each year and shall fix the Precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The Clerk shall issue the precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved budget.

2.4 The annual budgets shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

3 BUDGETARY CONTROL

3.1 Expenditure on revenue items may be incurred up to the amounts included for that class of expenditure in the approved budget.

3.2 No expenditure may be incurred that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget for that class of expenditure. During the budget year and with the approval of Council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent and available amounts may be moved to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve as appropriate.

3.3 The Clerk shall regularly provide the Council with a statement of receipts and payments to date under each head of the budgets, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements are to be prepared on a half yearly basis in June and December.

3.4 The Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repair replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of [£200]. The Clerk shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

3.5 Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year unless placed in an earmarked reserve by resolution of the council.

3.6 No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.

3.7 All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

4. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT

4.1 All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the Clerk in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

4.2 The Clerk shall complete the annual financial statements of the Council, including the Council's annual return, as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year and shall submit them and report thereon to the Council.

4.3 The Clerk shall complete the Accounts of the Council contained in the Annual Return (as supplied by the Auditor appointed from time to time by the Audit Commission) and shall submit the Annual Return for approval and authorisation by the Council within the timescales set by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.

4.4 The Clerk shall ensure that there is adequate and effective system of internal audit of the Council's accounting, financial and other operations in accordance with proper practices. Any officer or member of the Council shall, if the Clerk or Internal Auditor requires, make available such documents of the Council which appear to the Clerk or Internal Auditor to be necessary for the purpose of the internal audit and shall supply

the Clerk or Internal Auditor with such information and explanation as the Clerk or Internal Auditor considers necessary for that purpose.

- 4.5 The Internal Auditor shall be appointed by and shall carry out the work required by the Council in accordance with proper practices. The Internal Auditor, who shall be competent and independent of the operations of the Council, shall report to the Council in writing following Audit any comments regarding each financial year. In order to demonstrate objectivity and independence, the internal auditor shall be free from any conflicts of interest and have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Council.
- 4.6 The Clerk shall make arrangements for the opportunity for inspection of the accounts, books, and vouchers and for the display or publication of any Notices and statements of account required by Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 4.7 The Clerk shall, as soon as practicable, bring to the attention of all councillors any correspondence or report from the Internal or External Auditor, unless the correspondence is of a purely administrative matter.

5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND CHEQUES

- 5.1 The Council's banking arrangements, including the Bank Mandate, shall be made by the Clerk and approved by the Council. They shall be regularly reviewed for efficiency.
- 5.2 A schedule of the payments required, forming part of the Agenda for the Meeting shall be prepared by the Clerk and, together with the relevant invoices, be presented to Council. If the schedule is in order it shall be authorised by a resolution of the Council and shall be initialled by the Chairman of the Meeting. If more appropriate the detail may be shown in the Minutes of the Meeting.
- 5.3 Cheques drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule referred to in paragraph 5.2 or in accordance with paragraph 6.4 shall be signed by two members of Council.
- 5.4 To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque or order for payment with the counterfoil and the invoice or similar documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.

6 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

- 6.1 All payments shall be effected by cheque or other order drawn on the Council's bankers.
- 6.2 All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Clerk. The Clerk shall satisfy herself that the work, goods or services to which the invoice relates shall have been received, carried out, examined and approved.
- 6.3 The Clerk shall examine invoices in relation to arithmetic accuracy and shall analyse them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The Clerk shall take all steps to settle all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available Council Meeting.
- 6.4 If a payment is necessary to avoid a charge to interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, and the due date for payment is before the next scheduled Meeting of Council, where the Clerk certifies that there is no dispute or other reason to delay payment, the Clerk may (notwithstanding Para 6.3) take all

steps necessary to settle such invoices provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of Council.

6.5 The Council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received must be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by the Clerk (for example for postage or minor stationery items) shall be refunded on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

6.6 If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water) may be made by variable Direct Debit provided that the instructions are signed by two members and any payments are reported to Council as made. The approval of the use of a variable Direct Debit shall be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years.

7 PAYMENT OF SALARIES

7.1 The Clerk shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements of PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and salaries shall be as agreed by Council.

7.2 Payment of salaries may be made in accordance with the payroll records and on the appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that each payment is reported to and ratified by the next available Council Meeting.

8 LOANS AND INVESTMENTS

8.1 All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with Council policy.

8.2 The Council shall consider the need for an Investment Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any Policy shall be reviewed at least annually.

8.3 All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.

8.4 All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by Council as to terms and purpose. The terms and conditions of borrowings shall be reviewed at least annually.

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

9 INCOME

9.1 The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the Clerk.

9.2 Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council, notified to the Clerk and the Clerk shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.

9.3 The Council will review all fees and charges annually, following a report of the Clerk.

9.4 Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the Council and shall be written off in the year.

- 9.5 All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be banked intact as directed by the Clerk. In all cases, all receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers with such frequency as the Clerk considers necessary.
- 9.6 The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7 Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.
- 9.8 The Clerk shall promptly complete any VAT Return that is required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 section 33 shall be made at least annually coinciding with the financial year end.
- 9.9 Where any significant sums of cash are regularly received by the Council, the Clerk shall take such steps as are agreed by the Council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

10 ORDERS FOR WORK, GOODS AND SERVICES

- 10.1 An official order or letter shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared or an official order would be inappropriate. Copies of orders shall be retained.
- 10.2 Order books shall be controlled by the Clerk.
- 10.3 All members and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de minimis provisions in Regulation 11 (I) below.
- 10.4 The Clerk shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the Clerk shall ensure that the statutory authority shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the Minutes can record the power being used.

11 CONTRACTS

- 11.1 Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:
- (a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that these regulations shall not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:
- (i) for the supply of gas, electricity, water, sewerage and telephone services;
 - (ii) for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;
 - (iii) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant;
 - (iv) for work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council;
 - (v) for additional audit work of the external Auditor up to an estimated value of £250 (in excess of this sum the Clerk shall act after consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council);

- (vi) for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or are only sold at a fixed price.
- (b) Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding [£50,000] in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk shall invite tenders from at least three firms to be taken from the appropriate approved list.
- (c) When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the Council.
- (d) Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- (f) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of Council.
- (g) If less than three tenders are received for contracts above [£50,000] or if all the tenders are identical the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
- (h) Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall contain a statement to the effect of Standing Orders 61, 63 and 64.
- (i) When it is to enter into a contract less than [£50,000] in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below [£1,000] and above [£100] the Clerk shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10 (3) above shall apply.
- (j) The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.

12. PAYMENTS UNDER CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING OR OTHER CONSTRUCTION WORKS

- 12.1 Payments on account of the contract sum shall be made within the time specified in the contract by the Clerk upon authorised certificates of the architect or other consultants engaged to supervise the contract (subject to any percentage withholding as may be agreed in the particular contract).
- 12.2 Where contracts provide for payment by instalments the Clerk shall maintain a record of all such payments. In any case where it is estimated that the total cost of work carried out under a contract, excluding agreed variations, will exceed the contract sum of 5% or more a report shall be submitted to the Council.
- 12.3 Any variation to a contract or addition to or omission from a contract must be approved by the Council and Clerk to the Contractor in writing, the Council being informed where the final cost is likely to exceed the financial provision.]

13 ASSETS, PROPERTIES AND ESTATES

- 13.1 The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds of properties owned by the Council. The Clerk shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties owned by the Council, recording the 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.
- 13.2 No property shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £50.
- 13.3 The Clerk shall ensure that an appropriate and accurate Register of Assets and Investments is kept up to date. 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.

14 INSURANCE

- 14.1 Following the annual risk assessment (per Financial Regulation 17), the Clerk shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers
- 14.2 The Clerk shall give prompt notification to the Council of all new risks, properties or vehicles which require to be insured and of any alterations affecting existing insurances.
- 14.3 The Clerk shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 14.4 The Clerk shall be notified of any loss liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to Council at the next available meeting.
- 14.5 All appropriate employees of the Council shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the Council.

15 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 15.1 The Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by the council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.
- 15.2 When considering any new activity, the Clerk shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the Council.

16. REVISION OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- 16.1 It shall be the duty of the Council to review the Financial Regulations of the Council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these financial regulations.

APPENDIX 2

SHINCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL CYCLE OF EVENTS

Annual Review of Progress of Village Plan	April
Safety check on Recreation Grounds Equipment	April
Litter Pick	April
Parish and Parish Council Annual Meetings	May
Chairman's Report	May
Annual review and renewal of insurance and of risk assessment	May
Production of Annual Accounts	June
Best Kept Garden Competitions	June
Charitable Donation Requests	June
Annual Internal Audit	July
Annual External Audit	August
Litter Pick	October
Best Kept Garden Competitions	October
Annual budget Planning	November
Annual Review Recreation Grounds Expenditure	November
Charitable Donation Requests	December
Annual Budget/Precept finalised	December
Articles for Parish Magazine	Ongoing
Survey of Benches	Every 4 years
Survey of trees in village green areas	Every 5 years

APPENDIX 3

SHINCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

RISK MANAGEMENT – COUNCIL MEETING

Hazard		Action	
1.	Ensure all Council Members are aware of their statutory responsibilities and of changes in the law.	(a)	Clerk to maintain registers of interests and gifts
		(b)	Chair to ensure Councillors' interests are checked at the start of each Council meeting
		(c)	Clerk to provide appropriate manuals for new Councillors
		(d)	Councillors encouraged to attend training courses and County Association Meetings
		(e)	Chair to ensure circulation of new relevant material to all council members and to invite outside speakers as appropriate
2.	Arranging and Conduct of Council Meetings	(a)	Clerk to send summons and agenda for meetings to Councillors to arrive at least 3 days before date of meeting
		(b)	Clerk to display agenda and minutes on Parish Council noticeboards in advance of the meetings.
		(c)	Clerk to complete minutes of proceedings and ensure these are signed.
		(d)	Clerk to ensure meeting rooms are accessible to all.
		(e)	Clerk to ensure there is adequate and safe storage of Council records (both paper and computer based)
		(f)	Chair to ensure meetings are conducted in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders
		(g)	Chair to encourage public attendance and participation at Council meetings
		(h)	Chair to circulate information about Council activities to residents via community magazines
		(i)	Chair to ensure regular review of the Council's publication scheme, standing orders and financial regulations.

**SHINCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL
RISK MANAGEMENT – EMPLOYEES**

Hazard		Action	
1.	<u>Employment Law</u> Keeping up to date with changes in employment law	(a)	Clerk and Councillors to read information circulated monthly by Durham County Association of Local Councils (CDALC)
		(b)	Refer specific queries to CDALC, Durham County Council Human Resources Department, Citizens Advice Bureau or ACAS
		(c)	Chair to read current Clerk's contract and report any concerns
2.	<u>Absence of Clerk</u> Temporary help in case of Clerk's long term absence due to illness or accident	(a)	Chair or Vice-Chair to deal when absence occurs
		(b)	Check with CDALC regarding any help available at that time
		(c)	Contact secretarial agencies
		(d)	Contact Clerk regarding access to records, correspondence and bank accounts
3.	<u>Training of Clerk</u> Parish Council to encourage Clerk to undertake approved training and to meet the costs of this.	(a)	Chair and Clerk to discuss regularly the Clerk's training requirements
		(b)	These discussions should be recorded
		(c)	Council to examine and revise as necessary employment contracts for future employees
4.	<u>Safety of Clerk</u> Parish Council to ensure personal safety of Clerk	(a)	When Clerk is alone in the building where Parish Council meetings are held, Clerk to keep entrance doors locked.
		(b)	Clerk to ensure she has a working mobile phone with her
		(c)	Clerk not to admit any unknown persons when she is alone in the meeting place building
		(d)	Chair to ensure their early arrival for meetings
		(e)	Chair to check insurance cover

**SHINCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL
RISK MANAGEMENT – LAND OWNED OR LEASED BY PARISH COUNCIL**

Hazard		Action	
1.	(a) The Old Mine – owned site	(a)	Members of the Horticultural Committee to inspect regularly, especially the condition of pathways, presence of rubbish, state of information boards, and report to Parish Council
	(b) the Recreation Ground, Shincliffe Village – leased site	(a)	Members of the Horticultural Committee to inspect ground regularly to check grass cutting, hedging and fencing
		(b)	Members serving Parks United Committee to ensure annual safety check is carried out by Durham City or Durham County Council on all play equipment; and to make recommendations about equipment maintenance and replacement needs for Parish Council's annual budget
		(c)	To check that picnic tables and seating are maintained in good condition
		(d)	Clerk to keep record of locations of all equipment, eg. Benches, tables etc.
	(c) Recreation Ground, High Shincliffe	(a)	Members of the Horticultural Committee to inspect ground regularly to check grass cutting, hedging and fencing
		(b)	Members serving Parks United Committee to ensure annual safety check is carried out by Durham City or Durham County Council on all play equipment; and to make recommendations about equipment maintenance and replacement needs for Parish Council's annual budget
		(c)	To check that picnic tables and seating are maintained in good condition
		(d)	Clerk to keep record of locations of all equipment, eg. Benches, tables etc.
	(d) Village Green Areas, Shincliffe Village	(a)	Members of the Horticultural Committee to check maintenance of grassed areas
		(b)	Members of the Horticultural Committee to arrange regular survey

			of state of trees on village green areas (at least once every 5 years) and deal with any emergencies arising from condition of trees
		(c)	Members of the Horticultural Committee to have village green edging stones checked and repainted every 3 years

**SHINCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL
RISK MANAGEMENT – SEATING AND SHELTERS**

Hazard		Action	
1.	Bus Shelters	(a)	The Parish Council is not responsible for their maintenance, however all Councillors are asked to report any damage or graffiti to Durham City (or Durham County after end of March 2009)
2.	Benches		In addition to the seating in the park and on the village green, there are roadside benches for whose maintenance the Parish Council is responsible
		(a)	The Horticultural Committee will ensure that there is a regular (4 yearly) survey of the benches followed by repair, maintenance or removal as necessary
		(b)	The Horticultural Committee will ensure that advice is available for donors who wish to provide benches, as to cost and type of bench, location and installation
		(c)	In addition, the map showing the location of benches should be updated

APPENDIX 4

SHINCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL AUDIT PROCEDURES

Internal (Independent Audit)

This audit takes place in at the end of June/July each year after the Parish Council has approved the year end accounts and released for Audit at the June Parish Council Meeting.

The auditor at present is a Mr Ian Lawlan, a former Local Government Officer who audits other Parish Councils in County Durham as well.

The documents passed for inspection and checking are:

- Minute Book
- Receipt and Payment Book
- Bank Statements for HSBC Treasurers Account
- Bank Statements for HSBC High Interest Account
- All paying-in slips relating to both of these accounts
- National Savings Account Passbook for NSB Account
- Cheque Books
- All paid invoices and all cancelled cheques
- Insurance Policy
- Tax Declaration Information from HM Revenues and Customs (Clerk)
- Income and Expenditure Account
- Balance Sheet
- Supporting Statements
- Fixed Asset Register
- Lease for Land at Low Road, Shincliffe (recreation ground)
- Conveyance – Old Mine Site
- Petty Cash Book
- Audit Form (completed by Parish Council)

External Auditors (appointed by Audit Commission)

These Auditors are presently BDO Stoy Hayward LLP and the external audit takes place after the internal audit usually mid-July to early-August. A set date is given each year.

The documents passed for inspection and checking are:

- Income and Expenditure Account
- Bank Reconciliation
- Supporting Statements
- Audit Form (completed by Parish Council and internal auditor)