



cwmbran community council  
cyngor cymuned cwmbrân

You are summoned to attend the following meeting:

**Policy & Finance (Standing Orders) Sub-Committee**

**13 March 2014 @ 6.00 pm**

Venue: Community Centre r/o the Council House, Ventnor Road, Cwmbran NP44 3JY

Please note venue

## AGENDA

To: Councillors S Brooks, WM Howell, R Kemp, J Rees, DJ Williams and TJ Winter

To: ALL OTHER MEMBERS FOR INFORMATION

1. **Appointment of Chairman**
2. **Apologies for Absence**
3. **Members' Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have and sign the Interests Sheet to give details of the nature of the interest.

4. **Membership**

To note the membership of this sub committee, as confirmed by the Council on 19 December 2012.

Councillors S Brooks, WM Howell, R Kemp, J Rees, DJ Williams and TJ Winter

5. **Terms of Reference**

The Council established this sub committee to review its standing orders. The remit of the sub committee was subsequently extended to review the Financial Regulations, Contract Standing Orders and Manual of Financial Procedures. This was confirmed by the Council on 19 February 2014.



## 6. Review of Standing Orders, Contract Orders & Financial Regulations

A short commentary on each of the above is set out below. Draft Standing Orders and Regulations are attached. Members have also received the comments of the Council's internal auditor.

*Members may wish to consider all this information at this meeting or break the task up into a series of meetings.*

### (i) Standing Orders

The Council's current standing orders have been compared against the latest model published by One Voice Wales.

The majority of the council's existing standing orders are included within the new model form. There are inevitably some changes and the new model is in a slightly different order from the previous version. On the whole though, the documents are fairly similar. In places the model standing orders require information to be inserted by a council, or provide "either/or" options for a council to choose from.

Other features which members may wish to note include:

- Minor changes to matters in respect of which Motions may be moved without written notice and rules of debate
- There is no provision within the model form for formal questions from members, submitted in advance of a meeting
- There is also no longer formal provision for the submission of petitions
- The arrangements for appointing committees etc. are broadly the same but the model includes new arrangements for "determining if the public may participate" in meetings
- The wording in relation to Accounts & Accounting Statements differs in the new model. Some minor adjustment may be needed but, on the whole, it can be adopted for use
- The model does not deal with arrangements for considering the estimates or setting the precept, though this is covered by Financial Regulations
- Previous references to canvassing of members, inspection of documents and disclosure of confidential business are not specifically included in the new model
- There are new arrangements for dealing with breaches of the code of conduct. Any complaints would now be reported to the ombudsman

- The model standing orders prescribe arrangements for communicating with the local county council. However these arrangements would not suit Cwmbran Community Council's circumstances.

It is **recommended** that members consider the [attached Standing Orders](#).

(ii) Financial Regulations

The Council's Financial Regulations have not been reviewed since 2005. They contain reference to old legislation and occasional discrepancy with Contract Standing Orders. They are also described as "Financial Standing Orders and Regulations" which can cause confusion.

The Council's external auditors, Mazars have recommended that they be reviewed in the light of new "model" regulations which were published by One Voice Wales in September 2013. The Council has accepted this advice.

As the model regulations include the majority of the council's existing regulations, it would be sensible to adopt them "lock stock & barrel." Dates, months or values referred to in the model regulations can be changed to suit local circumstances. Other parts of the model regulations (shown in square parenthesis) may be deleted if not relevant. For larger councils, supplementary regulations are also suggested (re. Part 1: General).

The model regulations (and our existing regulation) state that cheques shall be signed by two members. However, the statutory provision upon which this is based is expected to be repealed – paving the way for electronic banking and use of debit cards. At the moment though, there is no firm indication as to when this change will come into being. The regulations can then be updated when further guidance is issued, which will be in the form of a revised Model.

It is **recommended** that members consider the [attached Financial Regulations](#).

(iii) Contract Standing Orders

The Council's existing Contract Standing Orders were adopted in March 2005.

One Voice Wales do not provide a model form of Contract Standing Orders. The Council's existed Contract Standing Orders have therefore been reviewed and

updated internally. A copy is attached. (Very few amendments of substance have been made to the 2005 version).

It is **recommended** that members consider the [attached Contract Standing Orders](#).

(iv) Manual of Financial Procedures

The Council adopted a Manual of Financial Procedures in 2005. One Voice Wales has recently advised that Financial Regulations and Standing Orders would be sufficient for the Council's needs.

It is **recommended** that the Manual of Financial Procedures is rescinded.

In addition to the above systems of internal control, Members should also have regard to the Governance and Accountability Handbook which is available on the One Voice Wales website. Here is a link to this 182 page document <http://www.onevoicewales.org.uk/practitioners-guide/practitioners-guide-2011>.

## 7. Way Forward

The adoption of these new arrangements will provide an opportunity to now review working practices to ensure compliance. This exercise will be undertaken by the Clerk in his role as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO). Any significant variances will be reported to members.



*David Collins, Clerk to the Council*  
6 March 2014  
[david@cwmbbran.gov.uk](mailto:david@cwmbbran.gov.uk)

tel. 01633 624154