



Supporting Information for Extraordinary Meeting on 01/05/26

2025/6-225 – Scheme of Delegation

The current Scheme of Delegation was drafted for a combined **Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)** role. Changes in staffing arrangements have led to uncertainty regarding which powers apply to which roles, particularly during absences or vacancies.

The revised Scheme of Delegation is required to clearly distinguish between the responsibilities and delegated authority of the Clerk and those of the Responsible Financial Officer and ensure in their absence the delegation passes to their respective deputies.

A copy of a proposed scheme of delegation will be included in **Appendix A**.

2025/6-227 – Clerk/RFO Return-to-Work Plan (Exempt Supporting Information)

This item concerns the proposed return-to-work arrangements following a period of long-term sickness absence. The supporting information contains personal and medical-related information and is therefore confidential.

2025/6-228 – Other Employment-Related Requests (Exempt Supporting Information)

This item relates to further employment-related requests submitted by or on behalf of the employee. Details are excluded from the public domain due to their sensitive employment nature

2025/6-229 – Appointment of Officers

At the previous Council meeting, interim officer appointments were agreed solely to ensure statutory cover while recruitment and interviews were undertaken. These arrangements were explicitly time-limited and expire at this meeting.

Interviews have now taken place and all available appointment options are before Council, including contingency and support roles, to enable members to determine a lawful and resilient staffing structure going forward.

All potential appointment options have therefore been included to allow Council to consider the best way forward once recruitment outcomes are known. Any options that are no longer required following the interview process will be **withdrawn at the meeting**.

2025/6-230 – Outsourcing of Accounts

The Council agreed to outsource its accounts work for the **2025/26 financial year**. There has been a change in circumstances regarding the delivery of accounts support previously in place. This item allows the Council to consider and determine whether outsourcing arrangements are still required and if so approve any new contractual arrangement.

Appendix A

Scheme of Delegation

Delegated authority is exercised in accordance with:

- Holbeach Parish Council Standing Orders
- Holbeach Parish Council Financial Regulations
- Relevant legislation and adopted Council policies

Where delegated powers are exercised, actions will be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the Council or relevant Committee.

In the absence of the Clerk or Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), powers devolve to the **Deputy Clerk** or **Deputy RFO**, or other authorised officer as appropriate.

1. Delegated Powers of the Clerk

The Clerk has the following delegated powers and shall be the Proper Officer for all administrative purposes.

A. Operational Matters and Council Business

1. To implement and give effect to decisions of the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees.
2. To take such administrative decisions as are necessary for the efficient day-to-day operation of the Council, provided that such decisions are consistent with Council policy and Standing Orders.
3. To take urgent decisions on behalf of the Council following consultation with the relevant Committee Chair or Chair/Vice-Chair, where delay would be detrimental to the Council, usually (but not confined to) a health & safety matter.
4. To exercise all functions of the Council as **Burial Authority**, including (but not limited to):
 - a. the administration of burials and interments;
 - b. granting permissions relating to graves, memorials and inscriptions in accordance with Council policy;
 - c. liaison with funeral directors and relevant authorities;
 - d. the day-to-day management of the Council's cemeteries.
5. To exercise delegated authority in relation to **allotments**, in accordance with the Council's Allotment Policy, including:
 - a. the issuing of allotment tenancies;
 - b. granting permission for sheds, structures or other items permitted under the policy;
 - c. the day-to-day management of allotment sites and tenancy matters.

B. Meetings

1. To arrange and convene meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees in consultation with the relevant Chair.
2. To convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office.
3. To accept apologies for absence from councilors and reasons given.



C. Correspondence and Communications

1. To receive and send correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council, except where Council has resolved otherwise.
2. To respond to consultation documents on behalf of the Council where no Member has requested referral to Council or Committee.
3. To issue factual statements, press releases and public communications in line with Council policy and previous resolutions.
4. To deal with all matters relating to **information governance**, including:
 - a. responding to Freedom of Information requests;
 - b. responding to Subject Access Requests and data protection enquiries;
 - c. the routine handling, disclosure and protection of information in accordance with data protection legislation and Council policy.

2. Delegated Powers of the Clerk and the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

The Clerk and RFO jointly hold the following delegated financial powers.

A. Authorisation of Expenditure

1. To authorise expenditure up to **£1,000 excluding VAT** within approved budgets.
2. In urgent circumstances, to authorise expenditure **above £1,000 and up to £2,000 excluding VAT**, subject to **written confirmation from two Councillors**.
3. In cases of serious risk to service delivery or public safety on Council premises, to authorise expenditure of **up to £5,000 excluding VAT** for necessary repair, replacement or urgent works, whether or not budget provision exists.
6. To instruct alternative goods or services where the originally approved option cannot be provided, provided the cost does not exceed **10% above the approved amount** and remains within budget.

B. Authorisation of Payments

1. To authorise payments of **up to £2,000 excluding VAT** in cases of serious risk to service delivery or public safety.
2. To authorise payments necessary to:
 - comply with contractual obligations,
 - pay salaries, pensions, PAYE and National Insurance, or
 - avoid charges under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, where the due date falls before the next Council meeting and there is no dispute.
3. To authorise fund transfers within the Council's banking arrangements **up to £50,000**, with a record reported to the next Finance Committee or Full Council meeting.

3. Exceptional Circumstances – Delegated Powers Where the Council Cannot Meet

The following powers apply **only where the Council cannot meet or is inquorate due to events beyond its control**, including (but not limited to) a pandemic, a period of national or official mourning, or other emergency situations.

These powers must be used **only where necessary** to protect the Council, its services, assets, staff, or the public. In the absence of the Clerk or RFO, the relevant powers pass to the **Deputy Clerk or Deputy RFO**, as appropriate.

A full record of **all decisions taken and payments authorised** must be submitted to the **next available meeting of the Council** for review and ratification.

1. Where immediate action is required and a meeting cannot be convened, the Clerk may exercise the **delegated powers and responsibilities of Committees**, in line with Council policy.

2. Temporary Staff & Contractors

Where **budget provision exists**, the Clerk may engage temporary staff or contractors for health and safety matters, urgent service continuity, or routine maintenance and repair of Council property, subject to procurement requirements for obtaining quotes and tenders being followed where practicable.

3. Emergency expenditure – budget not required

In cases of extreme risk to service delivery or a health and safety matter, the **Clerk or the Responsible Financial Officer** may authorise expenditure which, in their judgement, is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure may include urgent repair, replacement or other necessary work **whether or not budget provision exists**, and **without financial limit**, subject to **written confirmation from two Councillors**.

4. Authorised expenditure where budget provision exists

Where budget provision has been made, the **Clerk or the Responsible Financial Officer** may authorise expenditure or procure goods and services for **pre-approved projects or day-to-day operational activity**, subject to:

- consultation with **three Councillors** (one of whom shall not be a bank signatory); and
- compliance with procurement requirements where practicable.

5. Authorisation of payments to maintain continuity and compliance

The **Clerk or the Responsible Financial Officer** may authorise and make **all payments necessary** to maintain financial compliance and continuity of Council business where the Council cannot meet, **without financial limit**, including (but not limited to):

- salaries and wages;
- pension contributions, PAYE and National Insurance;
- contractual payments;
- statutory payments; and
- payments required to avoid financial loss or penalty.

Appendix B – Original Delegated Powers

The Clerk/RFO has the following delegated powers, which in their absences passes to the Deputy Clerk:

1. The Parish Clerk (or authorised assistant) shall be the proper officer for all proper officer functions
2. The Parish Clerk (or authorised assistant) shall carry out and implement any Council, committee, or sub-committee decision. (Not required as part of legislation)
3. The Parish Clerk (or authorised assistant) may give instructions for the carrying out of routine maintenance and repair of the Council's property and land where budget provision has been made for such works.
4. The Parish Clerk (or authorised assistant) may take urgent decisions on behalf of the Council following consultation with the relevant Committee or Chair/Vice-Chair. In the case of any financial implication / risk to the Parish Council, usually (but not confined to) a health & safety matter, the Parish clerk must comply with limits as authorised in adopted financial regulations, and report back to the next available meeting of the Council (either full Council or committee).

Payments:

To have a spend budget of £1,000 for work within the remit of the Council.

To have an emergency spend budget above £1,000 up to £2,000 (authorised in conjunction with the two Councillors) for work within the remit of the Council.

In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, the clerk may authorise revenue expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement, or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £5,000. The Clerk shall seek authorisation from two Councillors.

To make arrangements to pay salaries and wages to all employees of the Council.

To substitute alternative products/services where the originally agreed cannot be provided, subject to being no more than 10% above the original cost.

To authorize payments if it 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/RFO certify 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.

To authorize payments if it is an expenditure item authorised under 7.1 below (continuing contracts and obligations) provided that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council [or finance committee];

7.1 For each financial year the Clerk/RFO shall draw up a list of due payments which arise on a regular basis as the result of a continuing contract, statutory duty, or obligation (such as but not exclusively) Salaries, PAYE and NI, Pension Fund and regular maintenance contracts and the like for which council may authorise payment for the year provided that the requirements of financial regulation 4.1 (Budgetary Controls) are adhered to, provided also that a list of such payments shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting of council

Meetings:

The Clerk (or authorised assistant) shall arrange and call meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees in consultation with the relevant chairman.

To convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office.

To accept apologies from councillors and reasons given.

Communication & Correspondence:

To receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.

The Clerk/RFO may respond to consultation documents received by the Council where no member has requested the matter be considered by a committee.

The Clerk is the press officer of the Council and can respond to questions from the press and members of the public and can put out press releases and post to social media as long as the information is factual and in line with Council policy and agreement.

The Clerk/RFO has the following delegated powers, which in their absences passes to the Deputy Clerk, where the council cannot meet due to events beyond their control – a list of all decisions and payments made under these powers should be submitted to the next meeting of the Council for review and ratification.

The Clerk/RFO (in conjunction with three councillors) can authorise payments or procure parts and services on pre-approved projects or day to day expenditure where budget provision has

been made for such works. One of the three councillors should not be a signatory on the account. Requirements for obtaining quotes and tenders should be followed for the relevant procurement threshold.

In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, or a health & safety matter, the clerk may authorise expenditure on behalf of the council which in the clerk's judgement it is necessary to carry out. Such expenditure includes repair, replacement, or other work, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure. The Clerk shall seek authorisation from two Councillors.

In cases of extreme risk to the delivery of council services, a health & safety matter, or for the carrying out of routine maintenance and repair of the Council's property and land where budget provision has been made for such works; the clerk may employ temporary staff or contactors within budgetary provision pre-approved by Council. Requirements for obtaining quotes and tenders should be followed for the relevant procurement threshold.

The Parish Clerk (or authorised assistant) may take urgent decisions on behalf of the Council following consultation with two councillors. In the case of any financial implication / risk to the Parish Council, usually (but not confined to) a health & safety matter, the Parish clerk must comply with limits as authorised in adopted financial regulations, and report back to the next available meeting of the Council (either full Council or committee).

To carry out the delegated powers and responsibilities of all committees in line with relevant council policies.