

## **PAYMENT APPROVAL PROCESS**

Committee members have asked for confirmation of the payment approval process:

Currently, the hard copies and schedule of payments are left in the Town Hall for 2 councillors to agree/sign the payments. If they are happy, then a councillor authorises the payments online in order to release the payments. If they are not happy with any of the payments then they can refuse to pay and cancel the invoice from the bank. Only the signatories can cancel a payment on the bank.

Council currently have no online signature process in place so this needs investigating.

The Financial Regulations state:

- 7.1. The bank mandate agreed by the council shall identify a number of 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.
- 7.4. 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.
- 7.6. Two councillors who are authorised signatories shall check the payment details against the invoices before approving each payment using the online banking system.

The procedure has not been adhered to as unfortunately, Cllr A. Westbrook has been the only person registered for bank access for a long time. An application for Cllr Cleary is being processed.

We desperately need more councillors to become bank signatories so we have a pool we can call upon.

My recommendation would be that all members of the Finance, Governance & Performance Committee are approved as bank signatories. I have added this to the June Full Council meeting agenda for consideration.

Samantha Haywood, Locum Clerk