

# Internet Banking Policy for Trimley St Martin Parish Council

## 1. Internal Controls

- a) It is not a requirement that two people authorize electronic payments, however it is a general principle that more than one person should be involved in any payment, whether that is before, at or after the point at which the payment is made.
- b) The Parish Council has a current account and a deposit account with Unity Trust Bank with internet banking facilities set up for the day-to-day payment of invoices and receipt of income on the current accounts.
- c) The Clerk/RFO provides monthly reconciliations to full Council and these are checked against the bank statements by the Chairman
- d) Wherever possible, payments will be made using online banking, but payments by cheque will be made when necessary, following the existing controls and approvals, but the Council will move to online payments as the default position.
- e) The Council will have a minimum of three Councillors as authorised signatories at any one time.
- f) The Clerk/RFO shall be appointed as the Administrator for internet banking purposes. The Clerk will operate a 'create and submit only' authorisation and will be able to transfer funds between accounts held at the same bank.
- g) The Clerk/RFO will be the only authorised person enabled to set up a beneficiary or a payment.
- h) Access to internet banking accounts will be directly to the bank's log-in page and not through a search engine or e-mail link.
- i) Payment for items made by internet banking transfer must have evidence retained showing which member approved release of the payment.
- j) The Clerk/RFO and councillors using the Council's internet banking facility, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used. Signatories may request reimbursement for the installation and annual update of such software on their personal computers.
- k) No employee or Councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the Council or its bank accounts.
- l) Payments by direct debit or standing order will be included in the schedule of payments in the same way as paid invoices are recorded

## 2. Procedure

- a) The process of operating the online account will be the subject to the rules and security authorisation process of the agreed bank:
- b) All orders for payment will be verified for accuracy by the Parish Clerk and included on the payment schedule.
- c) The Parish Clerk will enter items for payment on the banks system
- d) An authorised Councillor will confirm the payments online within two days of the payment being initiated by the Parish Clerk.

- e) A schedule of all payments authorised for payment shall be prepared by the Parish Clerk and presented to each meeting of the Council together with any supporting invoices or other documentation. A councillor, not being a councillor authorised to approve payments online, will check the schedule against the invoices or other documentation. Where the schedule includes payments which have already been completed, the bank statement will also be checked to ensure that the amounts involved correspond correctly. The councillor checking the schedule will sign it to show that they have completed their checks.
- f) Where a councillor is to be reimbursed for expenditure, they should not be an authoriser (in the case of internet payments), or a signatory (in the case of cheque payments).