

BANK ACCOUNT SIGNATORIES

Cabinet - 9 March 2017

Report of the: Chief Finance Officer

Status: For Decision

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: This report seeks approval for a change to the list of officers authorised to sign cheques and sanction banking instruments on behalf of the Council. It applies to just one of the Council's bank accounts.

This report supports the Key Aim of efficient management of the Council's resources.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Scholey

Contact Officer Roy Parsons, Principal Accountant - Ext 7204

Recommendations to Cabinet:

- a) That Mr John Leach, former Solicitor, no longer be authorised to sign cheques and sanction banking instruments on behalf of the Council in relation to the Chief Executive's Imprest Account; and
 - b) That pursuant to Financial Procedure Rules 4.73 and 4.74, Mr Martin Goodman, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, and Mr David Lagzdins, Solicitor, be authorised to sign cheques and sanction banking instruments on behalf of the Council in relation to the Chief Executive's Imprest Account.
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Reason for recommendations: To bring up to date and expand the list of authorised signatories for one of the Council's bank accounts.

Background and Introduction

- 1 The Council operates an imprest account for use by the Legal Section to defray small but urgent items of expenditure. Typically, those items might be for Land Registry searches or legal fees where a cheque has to be deposited with an application.
- 2 This account operates independently of the Council's main bank accounts. It is funded up to a maximum of £700 at any one time. The signatories to it are members of the Legal Section.

Changes Required

- 3 The Council's Financial Procedure Rules require Cabinet approval for officers other than the Chief Executive or Section 151/Chief Finance Officer to be able to sign cheques or sanction banking instruments on behalf of the Council.
- 4 At present, the only approved signatories to the account are Mr Graham Grove and Mr John Leach, the latter of whom left the Council's employment some while ago. Mr Leach's authorisation expired upon his termination of employment. The recommendations in this report seek to increase the list of signatories from two to three in order to provide cover for staff absences.
- 5 As the account is only funded to a maximum of £700, it is proposed that a sole signatory is required for items of expenditure below this sum and that dual signatories are required for items of expenditure above it.

Key Implications

Financial

- 6 There are no financial implications.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

- 7 Under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Section 151 Officer has statutory duties in relation to the financial administration and stewardship of the authority, including the operation of banking facilities.
- 8 For day to day practical reasons, officers need to be authorised to sign cheques and sanction banking instruments on behalf of the Council. Failure to have authorised signatories in place would severely restrict the Council in the way in which it could operate bank accounts and deal with its financial needs.
- 9 Protection is in place by limiting the balance held in the Chief Executive's Imprest Account to a maximum of £700 at any one time and requiring dual signatories on amounts over this sum.

Equality Assessment

- 10 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Conclusions

- 11 In order to facilitate payment of small but urgent items of expenditure, an imprest account is maintained. Members are being asked to update the list of authorised signatories to it.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

Constitution of Sevenoaks District Council,
Appendix D - Financial Procedure Rules:-

[Document 21 - Appendix D - Financial Procedure Rules](#)

**Adrian Rowbotham
Chief Finance Officer**