

BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL

Full Council

Date of Meeting - Thursday 15 January 2026

Policy Review

Recommendation

The Council to consider Standing Order 3i and 4v.

The Council RESOLVE to agree:

To adopt the following policies:

- **11.1 Standing Orders (with inclusion of 3i and 4v as agreed in the meeting)**
- **11.2 Data Protection Policy**
- **11.3 Freedom of Information Policy**
- **11.4 IT Policy**
- **11.5 Risk Management**
- **11.6 Investment Strategy**
- **11.7 Mayoral Handbook**

Ward

All

Risk Management

To ensure Council decisions and actions are effective, lawful, up to date, and reflect local needs.

Crime Prevention

To ensure the Council works within the legislation.

Objective

To ensure good governance and legal compliance.

Report

Policy review is an ongoing process. While a full policy review is underway, the first suite of policies is presented for consideration and adoption by the Council.

Standing Orders (Agenda Item 11.1)

Standing Orders are the written rules and governing document of the Council. Standing Orders have been updated using the latest NALC template model which is in line with the current legislation and has been tailored, where permitted, to suit the needs of the Town Council. Within this version legal requirements are in bold. Two highlighted sections require council consideration:

The Council should consider which of the following it wishes to adopt:
Standing Order 3i:

[A person shall stand when requesting to speak and when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]

OR

[A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]. The chair of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.

As highlighted in the Committee membership decision report, the council may wish to include:

Standing Order 4v. *The council may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee and the Complaints and Grievance Sub-Committee if the ordinary members of the committee or Complaints and Grievance Sub-Committee confirm to the Proper Officer 2 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend*

Note: substitutions already apply to the Complaints and Grievance Sub-Committee.

Digital and Data Compliance (Agenda Item 11.2, 11.3 & 11.4)

The Smaller Authorities Proper Practices Panel updated the Practitioners' Guide 2025 with the addendum to the Annual Governance and Accountability Return of Assertion 10 on Digital and Data Compliance. To ensure full compliance, a review has been undertaken of Data Protection (Item 11.2), Freedom of Information (Item 11.3), and a new IT Policy (Item 11.4) developed.

Together these policies ensure that sensitive information is handled in a controlled environment with appropriate security measures and fully aligns with General Data Protection Regulations.

The above three policies are attached for consideration and approval.

Risk Management (Agenda Item 11.5)

The Council is required to annually assess the risks facing the council and take appropriate steps to manage those risks.

The Risk Management Policy with Register has been reviewed and updated. It is attached for consideration and approval.

Investment Strategy (Agenda Item 11.6)

The Council is required to review our Investments Policy annually, the policy has been updated in line with statutory guidance from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government.

Mayoral Handbook (Agenda Item 11.7)

The Mayoral Handbook has been updated reinforce Civic Ceremonial Procedures. It is attached for consideration and approval.

Thanks should be noted to all Officers for their work on this review.

Elaine Brown
Deputy Town Clerk

8 January 2026