**Northampton Town Council
Credit Card Use Policy**

**1.0 Purpose of the Policy**

1.1 The purpose of this policy document is to:

• To ensure strong financial management and accountability controls are in place for the Council’s business credit card transactions;

• To protect both staff and the Council from the risk of fraud and unauthorised expenditure.

**2.0 Credit Card Provision**

2.1 The Council recognise that the provision of a business credit card helps to achieve best value and efficient processing for some forms of minor business expenditure.

2.2 The Council has a business credit card with Unity Bank. The one business credit card with a credit limit of £2,000.

2.3 The Town Clerk is the named cardholder on the business credit card account. Any requests for additional cardholders must be authorised by the Policy and Finance Committee.

2.4 The credit card can only be used for Council related expenditure within the Town Clerk’s delegated authority. Use of the card for personal transactions is strictly prohibited.

2.5 The credit card has been set up to pay the full balance automatically each month.

**3.0 Authorisation of Transactions**

3.1 The Town Clerk will complete and process all credit card transactions, and log all requests originating from other members of staff for such purchases.

3.2 All credit card transactions will be reported to the Accounts Sub-Committee for authorisation, via the schedule of accounts, at the next relevant Council meeting following receipt of the monthly credit card statement.

3.3 The credit card can be used for payments online, in-person and on the phone (if absolutely necessary). When online payments are made, the cardholder should be aware of internet security precautions and, where possible, only purchase from reputable and known suppliers with a valid website security certificate. Credit card details and security information should not be supplied via email as this is not a secure method of sharing payment information.

**4.0 Credit Card Procedures**

4.1 The credit card should only be used for low value and one-off purchases requiring immediate payment and where the payment on invoice option is unavailable.

4.2 The Council’s Financial Regulations apply to all transactions made by credit card.

4.3 No cash withdrawals are to be made with the card.

4.4 Original receipts, including VAT receipts, are to be obtained for all card transactions. Prepaid invoices should be made out in the name of Northampton Town Council showing the Council’s office address.

4.5 The credit card and PIN should be kept separately in a locked cabinet. If the card is lost or the PIN is compromised, the Town Clerk must inform the card provider immediately.

4.6 The Town Clerk will monitor the monthly credit card balance as part of the financial monitoring process. Any anomalies identified will be followed up and in the case of a suspicious transaction, the credit card company will be contacted immediately.

4.7 Any named cardholder who leaves the employment of the Town Council or ceases to be an authorised named cardholder will have their use of the card immediately revoked pending full cancellation of the card.

**5.0 Unauthorised Use of the Credit Card**

5.1 The use of the credit card for any purpose that is not in accordance with this policy may result in action being taken under the Council’s Disciplinary Policy and the withdrawal of the card. Examples of unauthorised use include transactions for personal or non-business use, the use of the card without prior authorisation by the Town Clerk and the failure to comply with the terms of this policy.

5.2 Transactions must only be made by the named business credit cardholder.

**6.0 Council Staff Declaration**

6.1 This policy is to be issued to all Town Council officers.

Approved and adopted by Policy and Finance Committee meeting 25 April 2022