

Standing Orders

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1. Meetings

- (a) Meetings shall not take place in premises, which at the time of the meetings, are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.
- (b) When calculating three clear days for notice of meetings to councillors and the public, the following days shall not count; the day on which the notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of Christmas break, a day of Easter break, a bank holiday, a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.
- (c) Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.
- (d) A period of 15 minutes is set aside at each meeting for the parishioners to raise issues with the Council. Issues shall be raised through the Chairman. Only one parishioner at a time may speak. Should more than one parishioner wish to speak, the Chairman will decide in which order questions are taken. The Chairman will decide if the question requires an oral or written response.
- (e) In accordance with Standing Order 1(c) above, the press shall be provided reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to attend.
- (f) Subject to Standing Orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman may in his/her absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman (if any).
- (g) The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman, if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.
- (h) Subject to Standing Order (o) below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.
- (i) The Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes, may exercise his/her casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.
- (j) Unless Standing Orders provide otherwise, voting on any other questions shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a Councillor, prior to the vote taking place, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each Councillor present and voting gave his/her vote for or against the question.
- (k) The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of the Councillors present or absent.
- (l) The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to Councillors in respect of the entire meeting.
- (m) An interest arising from the code of conduct adopted by the Council, the existence and nature of which is required to be disclosed by a Councillor at a meeting shall be recorded in the minutes.
- (n) No business shall be transacted at a meeting unless at least one third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.
- (o) If a meeting is or becomes inquorate, no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be adjourned.

2 Ordinary Council meetings (See also Standing Order 1)

- (a) In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new Councillors elected take office.
- (b) In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held in May in such a date as the Council may direct.
- (c) If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.
- (d) In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.
- (e) The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.
- (f) The Chairman of the Council, unless he/she has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his/her successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- (g) The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless he/she resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- (h) In an election year, if the current Chairman has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council, but must give a casting vote in the case of equality of votes.
- (i) In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he/she shall reside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He/She may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of a new Chairman and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- (j) Following the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows:-
 - (I) In an election year, delivery by councillors of their declarations of acceptance of office
 - (II) Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council
 - (III) Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations
 - (IV) Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back
 - (V) Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment
 - (VI) Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks
 - (VII) Review of the Council's memberships of other bodies
 - (VIII) Review of the Council's complaints procedure
 - (IX) Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the Council for the year ahead.

3 Proper Officer

- (a) The Proper Officer of the Council shall be the Clerk
- (b) The Council's proper officer shall do the following:-
 - (i) Sign and serve on Councillors by delivery or post at their residences a summons confirming
 - (ii) the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council at least 3 clear days before the meeting
 - (iii) Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by Councillors is signed by them.
 - (iv) Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his/her office, in accordance with standing order 3(b)(i)
 - (v) Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings
 - (vi) Receive and retain copies of bylaws made by other local authorities
 - (vii) Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from Councillors
 - (viii) Keep proper records required before and after meetings
 - (ix) Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary
 - (x) Manage the organisation, storage of and access to information held by the Council in electronic and paper form.
 - (xi) Arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's financial regulations
 - (xii) Refer a planning application to the Chairman where consideration has to be given before the next scheduled meeting
 - (xiii) Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or standing orders

4 Motions requiring written notice

- (a) The Council does not require written notice of motions.
- (b) No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda for that meeting (subject to the exceptions in paragraph 5)

5 Motions in respect of the following may be moved without prior notice

- (a) To appoint a person to preside at a meeting
- (b) To approve the absences of Councillors
- (c) To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting
- (d) To correct any inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting
- (e) To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience
- (f) To proceed to the next business on the agenda
- (g) To close or adjourn debate
- (h) To consider a report and/or recommendation by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant
- (l) To exclude members of the press or public from a meeting

- (j) To exclude any standing orders except those which are mandatory by law
- (k) To adjourn the meeting
- (l) To answer questions from Councillors
- (m) To authorise legal deeds to be signed by two Councillors and witnessed

6 Code Of Conduct

- (a) All Councillors shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council
- (b) If paragraph 12(2) of the code of conduct contained in the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 (SI No 1159) has been adopted by the Council or pursuant to relevant provisions in a statutory code of conduct in force at the time, Councillors may exercise the rights contained in Standing Order 7(c) below only if members of the public are permitted to
 - (i) make representations,
 - (ii) answer questions and
 - (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted
- (c) Councillors with a prejudicial interest in relation to any item of business being transacted at a meeting may
 - (i) make representations,
 - (ii) answer questions and
 - (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted but must, thereafter, leave the room or chamber.

7 Minutes

- (a) If a draft copy of the minutes of a preceding meeting has been circulated to Councillors no later than the day of service of the summons to attend the scheduled meeting they shall be taken as read
- (b) No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the minutes shall be raised in accordance with standing order 5(d)
- (c) Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.

8 Rescission of previous resolutions

- (a) A resolution of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except by special motion moved by at least 2 Councillors of the Council
- (b) When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to standing order 11(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months

9 Expenditure

- (a) Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's financial regulations
- (b) The Council's financial regulations shall be reviewed once a year
- (c) The Council's financial regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee, sub-committee or an employee

10 Execution and sealing of legal deeds

- (a) A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by resolution
- (b) In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 10(a) above, any two members of the Council, may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures

11 Extraordinary meetings (see also standing order 1)

- (a) The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time
- (b) If the Chairman of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within 7 days of having been requested to by two Councillors, those two Councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two Councillors

12 Accounts and Financial Statement

- (a) All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Council's financial regulations, which shall be reviewed annually
- (b) The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply each Councillor as soon as practical after 31st March and 30th September in each year a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments for each half year and the balances held. A financial statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis for the year to 31st March shall be presented to each Councillor before the end of the following month of May. The Statement of accounts of the Council (which is subject to external audit), including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to Council for formal approval before 30th June

13 Estimates/Precepts

- (a) The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of January

14 Canvassing

- (a) Canvassing Councillors directly or indirectly over matters relating to a tender shall disqualify a person from being awarded the tender

15 Unauthorised activities

- (a) Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual Councillor shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council:
 - (i) inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right of duty to inspect; or

- (ii) issue orders, instructions or directions

16 Confidential business

- (a) Councillors and employees shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware is of confidential nature

17 Matters affecting Council employees

- (a) If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the Council has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to standing order 1(c).
- (b) The Council shall keep written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected.

18 Freedom of Information Act 2000

- (a) All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed by the Chairman
- (b) Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman. The Chairman shall do everything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000

19 Relations with the media

- (a) All requests for information shall be dealt with by the Chairman in consultation with the Proper Office. No other Councillors, in their official capacity, shall issue oral or written statements, without authorisation of the Chairman or Proper Officer.

20 Liaison with District and County Councillors

- (a) An invitation to attend a meeting shall be sent, together with a copy of the agenda, to the Councillor(s) of the District and County Council representing its electoral ward
- (b) Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of correspondence to the District or County Council will be sent to the Councillor representing its electoral ward

21 Financial matters

- (a) The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:-
 - (i) The accounting records and system of internal control
 - (ii) The assessment and management of financial risk faced by the Council
 - (iii) The work of the internal auditor
 - (iv) Procurement policies where contracts are less than £60000.00
- (b) Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £60000.00 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in standing order 21(c) below

- (c) Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:-
 - (i) A public notice of intention to place a contract to be placed in a local newspaper
 - (ii) A specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up
 - (iii) Tenders are to be sent, in a sealed marked envelope, to the Proper Officer by a stated date and time.
 - (iv) Tenders submitted are to be opened, after the stated closing date and time, by the Proper Officer and at least one member of the Council
 - (v) Tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of the Council
- (d) The Council is not bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote
- (e) Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed £138,893 (or other threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time) the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts regulations 2006 (SI No 5, as amended) and the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No. 6, as amended) apply to the contract and, if either of those regulations apply, the Council must comply with EU procurements rules.

22 Allegations of breaches of the code of conduct

- (a) On receipt of a notification that there has been an alleged breach of the code of conduct the Proper Officer shall refer it to the code of conduct sub-committee (Three Councillors not involved in the alleged breach).
- (b) Where the notification relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the sub-committee of that fact, who, upon receipt of such notification, shall nominate a person to assume the duties of the Proper Officer set in the remainder of this standing order, who shall continue to act in respect of that matter as until the complaint is resolved
- (c) Where the notification relates to a complaint made by an employee (not being the Proper Officer) the Proper Officer shall ensure that the employee in question does not deal with any aspect of the complaint.
- (d) The subject matter of notifications shall be confidential and, insofar as is possible to do so by law, the Council (including the Proper Officer and the sub-committee) shall take the steps set out below, together with other steps considered necessary to maintain confidentiality.
 - (i) Draft the summonses and agendas in such a way that the identity and subject matter of the complaint are not disclosed
 - (ii) Ensure that any background papers containing the information set out in standing order 22(a) above are not made public
 - (iii) Ensure that the public and press are excluded from meetings as appropriate
 - (iv) Ensure the minutes of the meeting preserve confidentiality
 - (v) Consider any liaison that may be required with the person or body with statutory responsibilities for the investigation of the matter
- (e) Standing order 22(d) above should not be taken to prohibit the Council (whether through the Proper Officer or sub-committee) from disclosing information to members and officers of the Council or to other persons where such disclosure is necessary to deal with the complaint or is required by law
- (f) The sub-committee shall have the power to:-
 - (i) Seek documentary and other evidence from the person or body with statutory responsibilities for investigation of the matter
 - (ii) Seek and share information relevant to the complaint
 - (iii) Grant the member involved a financial indemnity in respect of legal costs, which shall be in accordance with the law and subject to approval by a meeting of the full Council
- (g) References in standing order 22 to a notification shall be taken to refer to a communication of any kind which relates to a breach or an alleged breach of the code of conduct of a councillor

23 Variation. revocation and suspension of standing orders

- (a) Any or every part of the standing orders, except those which are mandatory by law, may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business
- (b) A motion to permanently add to or to vary or to revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders not mandatory by law shall not be carried unless two-thirds of the councillors at a meeting of the Council vote in favour of the same

24 Standing orders to be given to Councillors

- (a) The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor upon delivery of his/her declaration of acceptance of office
- (b) The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final
- (c) A Councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than 3 times in one meeting may result in him/her being excluded from the meeting.