



## **Standing Orders**

**Contents**

- 1. Meetings..... 1
- 2. Ordinary Council meetings ..... 1
- 3. Proper Officer ..... 2
- 4. Motions not requiring written notice ..... 2
- 5. Rules of debate..... 3
- 6. Code of conduct (England) ..... 3
- 7. Minutes..... 4
- 8. Rescission of previous resolutions ..... 4
- 9. Expenditure ..... 4
- 10. Committees ..... 4
- 11. Extraordinary meetings ..... 4
- 12. Working Parties ..... 5
- 13. Accounts and Financial Statement ..... 5
- 14. Estimates/precepts..... 5
- 15. Inspection of documents ..... 5
- 16. Unauthorised activities..... 5
- 17. Power of well-being (England) ..... 5
- 18. Matters affecting council employees ..... 6
- 19. Freedom of Information Act 2000..... 6
- 20. Relations with the press/media ..... 6
- 21. Liaison with City Council Ward Councillors ..... 6
- 22. Financial matters ..... 6
- 23. Allegations of breaches of the code of conduct..... 6
- 24. Variation, revocation & suspension of standing orders ..... 7
- 25. Standing orders to be given to councillors..... 7

## 1. Meetings

- a Meetings shall not take place in premises, which at the time of the meeting, are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.
- b When calculating the 3 clear days for notice of a meeting to councillors and the public, the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning shall not count.
- 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 Subject to standing order 1(c) above, members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.
- e The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing order 1(d) above] shall not exceed 15 minutes.
- f Subject to standing order 1(e) above, each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
- g A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- h A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak during public participation and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The Chairman may at any time permit an individual to be seated when speaking.
- i Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Chairman.
- j Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chairman shall direct the order of speaking.
- k Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is not permitted without the Council's consent.
- l 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 be present.
- m The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors in respect of the entire meeting.
- n 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.
- o No business may 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 Parish Council meeting be 4 and other committee be 3.
- p If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be adjourned. Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be transacted at a following meeting.
- q Meetings shall not exceed a period of 2 1/2 hours.

## 2. Ordinary Council meetings

- 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 on such day in

May as the Council may direct.

- c. If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 7pm.
- d. In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in 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 has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- g. The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless he 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 of the Council 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 an 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 shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

### **3. Proper Officer**

- a. The Council's Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or such other employee as may be nominated by the Council from time to time or (ii) such other person appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence. The Proper Officer and the person appointed to act as such during the Proper Officer's absence shall fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer in standing orders.
- b. The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following.
  - i. Upon the Council having first resolved that service of summons on councillors confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda for a meeting by delivery or post at their residences at least 3 clear days before a meeting is not expedient electronically serve on councillors a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council and a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee at least 3 clear days before the meeting provided any such email contains the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer.
  - ii. Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).
  - iii. Include in the agenda all motions unless a councillor has given written notice at least 5 days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it.
  - iv. Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office.
  - v. Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.
  - vi. Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.
  - vii. Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.

### **4. Motions not requiring written notice**

- a.
  - i. To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
  - ii. To approve the absences of councillors.
  - iii. To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
  - iv. To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.

- v. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
- vi. To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
- vii. To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
- viii. To close or adjourn debate.
- ix. To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee.
- x. To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any councillors (including substitutes) there to.
- xi. To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
- xii. To dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
- xiii. To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee.
- xiv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub-committee or an employee.
- xv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
- xvi. To authorise legal deeds [to be sealed by the Council's common seal] OR [signed by two councillors] and witnessed.  
*(See standing orders 14(a) and (b) below.)*
- xvii. To authorise the payment of monies up to £300.
- xviii. To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
- xix. To extend the time limit for speeches.
- xx. To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
- xxi. To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
- xxii. To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders.
- xxiii. To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law.
- xxiv. To adjourn the meeting.

## 5. Rules of debate

- a Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chairman's direction for reasons of expedience.
- b Subject to standing orders, a motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- c During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A Councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting he is concerned by.
- d A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman and his decision shall be final.

## 6. Code of conduct (England)

- 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(d) 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 copy of the draft 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(a) (iv) above.
- 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.
- d If the Chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:  
*“The Chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the ( ) held on [date] in respect of ( ) were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the majority of the ( ) and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”*

## 8. Rescission of previous resolutions

- a A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least 4 councillors of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- 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 to an employee.

## 10. Committees

- a The Council may, at its annual meeting, appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as may be necessary, and:
  - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
  - ii. may permit committees to determine the dates of their meetings;
  - iii. shall appoint and determine the term of office of councillor or non-councillor members of such a committee (unless the appointment of non-councillors is prohibited by law) so as to hold office no later than the next annual meeting;
  - iv. may in accordance with standing orders, dissolve a committee at any time.

## 11. Extraordinary meetings

- 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 do so 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. Working Parties**

- a The Council may appoint working parties comprised of a number of councillors and non-councillors.
- b Working parties may consist wholly of persons who are non-councillors.

## **13. 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 at least annually.
- b The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments for the each quarter and the balances held at the end of a quarter. This statement should include a comparison with the budget for the financial year. A Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 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 30 June.

## **14. Estimates/precepts**

- a **The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year** at its meeting before the end of January.
- b Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Proper Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than December.

## **15. Inspection of documents**

- a Subject to standing orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a councillor may, for the purpose of his official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee or a sub-committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its committees or sub-committees shall be available for inspection by councillors.

## **16. Unauthorised activities**

- a Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee:
  - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
  - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

## **17. Power of well-being (England)**

- a Before exercising the power to promote well-being, a meeting of the full Council shall have passed a resolution to confirm it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria required to qualify as an eligible parish council.
- b The Council's period of eligibility begins on the date that the resolution under standing order 25 (a) above was made and expires on the day before the annual meeting of the Council that takes

place in a year of ordinary elections.

- c After the expiry of its preceding period of eligibility, the Council continues to be an eligible council solely for the purpose of completing any activity undertaken in the exercise of the power to promote well-being which was not completed before the expiry of the Council's preceding period of eligibility referred to in standing order 25(b) above.

## **18. Matters affecting council employees**

- a If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the Council OR the Discipline & Grievance Hearing Committee OR the Discipline and Grievance Appeal Committee has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded.

## **19. Freedom of Information Act 2000**

- a All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- b Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Freedom of Information Working Party. The said working party shall make immediate recommendation to the Council to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 including exercising the powers of the Proper Officer in respect of Freedom of Information requests.

## **20. Relations with the press/media**

- a All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

## **21. Liaison with City Council Ward Councillors**

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillors of the City Council representing its electoral ward.
- b Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter sent to the City Council shall be sent to the Ward Councillors.

## **22. Financial matters**

These matters are dealt with separately the Council's Financial Regulations

## **23. 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 Council.
- b Where the notification relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of that fact. The Council will upon receipt of such notification, nominate a person to assume the duties of the Proper Officer set out in the remainder of this standing order, who shall continue to act in respect of that matter as such until the complaint is resolved.
- c Where a 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.

## **24. Variation, revocation & 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.

## **25. 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 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 being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.