



# STANDING ORDERS

## 2024

These Standing Orders are based upon the NALC Model Standing Orders (2018) (England) and were approved by Keynsham Town Council on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2019 with the exception of Standing Order 19 which was approved by Town Council on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2019 (amended 21 June 2022)

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This publication contains new model standing orders which reference new legislation introduced after 2013 when the last model standing orders were published.

## **HOW TO USE MODEL STANDING ORDERS**

Standing orders are the written rules of a local council. Standing orders are essential to regulate the proceedings of a meeting. A council may also use standing orders to confirm or refer to various internal organisational and administrative arrangements. The standing orders of a council are not the same as the policies of a council but standing orders may refer to them.

Local councils operate within a wide statutory framework. NALC model standing orders incorporate and reference many statutory requirements to which councils are subject. It is not possible for the model standing orders to contain or reference all the statutory or legal requirements which apply to local councils. For example, it is not practical for model standing orders to document all obligations under data protection legislation. The statutory requirements to which a council is subject apply whether or not they are incorporated in a council's standing orders.

The model standing orders do not include model financial regulations. Financial regulations are standing orders to regulate and control the financial affairs and accounting procedures of a local council. The financial regulations, as opposed to the standing orders of a council, include most of the requirements relevant to the council's Responsible Financial Officer. Model financial regulations are available to councils in membership of NALC.

## **DRAFTING NOTES**

Model standing orders that are in bold type contain legal and statutory requirements. It is recommended that councils adopt them without changing them or their meaning. Model standing orders not in bold are designed to help councils operate effectively but they do not contain statutory requirements so they may be adopted as drafted or amended to suit a council's needs. It is NALC's view that all model standing orders will generally be suitable for councils.

For convenience, the word "councillor" is used in model standing orders and, unless the context suggests otherwise, includes a non-councillor with or without voting rights.

## 1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

- a (i) Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting
- (ii) A motion to vary the order of business on the grounds of urgency:-
  - (a) may be proposed by the Chairman or by any member and, if proposed by the Chairman, may be put to the vote without being seconded, and
  - (b) shall be put to the vote, without discussion.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded and proper notice has already been given
- c If a motion specified in the summons is not moved either by the member who gave notice of it or by any other member, it shall, unless postponed by the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his/her own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.

- m The mover of a motion or of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding three minutes.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote which shall be limited to 3 minutes
- o Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
  - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
  - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he/she last spoke;
  - iii. to make a point of order;
  - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
  - v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p During the debate on 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/she considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he/she is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his/her decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
  - i. to amend the motion;
  - ii. to proceed to the next business;
  - iii. to adjourn the debate;
  - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
  - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
  - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
  - vii. to exclude the public and press;
  - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
  - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and

that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his/her right of reply.

- t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion or amendment under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.
- u A member who has proposed a motion, which has been referred to any committee, sub - committee or working party of which he/she is not a member, may explain his/her motion to that body but shall not vote.

## 2. **DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS**

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

### 3. MEETINGS GENERALLY

- Full Council meetings •
- Committee meetings •
- Sub-committee 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 **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include 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.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice**
- d **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.**
- e (i) Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda with the permission of the Chairman
- (ii) Members of the Public will have the opportunity to ask the Chairman any question concerning, or make observations upon, the business of the Council, at the start of the meeting, provided notice of the question along with the name and address of the member of public has been given to the Town Clerk at least four clear days before the meeting where possible, and in any case to the Chairman before the meeting and this applies to all committees of the Council
- (iii) Members of the Public may also speak on one single item only *on the Agenda*, only per meeting, just prior to that item being discussed, unless otherwise agreed by the Chair, or Chair of a committee, Each person may speak for not more than two minutes, with a maximum of two speakers per item in favour and two speakers per item against or at the Chairman's discretion. To facilitate the smooth running of the meeting, Members of the Public will be asked to register their interest with the Town Clerk prior to the start of the meeting
- (iv)
  - i. (41). A Member may ask the Chairman any question concerning the business of the Council, provided notice of the question has been given to the Town Clerk at least 4 clear days before the meeting where possible,

and in any case to the Chairman before the meeting. The Chairman must rule out of order any statement that is not a question and no question should lead to or result in a resolution with financial or staffing considerations

ii. (42). No question not connected with business under discussion shall be asked except during the part of the meeting set aside for questions

iii. (43). The Chairman may decline to answer a question from a member of the public, or may agree to supply the Councillor or member of the public concerned with a written answer within 10 working days

f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 10 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

g Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 2 minutes.

h In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question nor be put to a vote. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given or the matter referred to a Committee

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

j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his/her comments to the chairman of the meeting.

k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking

l Whenever the Chairman rises during a debate, all other members shall be seated and silent

- m **Subject to standing order 3(n), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To “report” means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**



- n **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- o **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- p **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his/her absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one).**
- q **The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- r **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- s **The chairman of a meeting 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.**

*See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.*

- t **(ii) Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, 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 that question. Such a request shall be made before the vote is taken.**

(ii) A secret ballot may be requested by at least two members for election of the Chair, Vice Chair and when co-opting.

- u The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
  - i. the time and place of the meeting;
  - ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
  - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
  - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors

with voting rights;

- v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
- vi. if there was a public participation session; and
- vii. the resolutions made.

- v **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.**
- w **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 meeting be less than three.**

*See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.*

- x **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be automatically delegated to the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairperon of the meeting as soon as practicable
- y A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2.5 hours.

#### **4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, membership of an advisory committee, sub-committee of the advisory committee or working party may not consist exclusively of non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees (including task and finish working groups) as may be necessary, and subject to any statutory provision
  - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
  - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a

standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;

- iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
  - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee; and shall not appoint any member of a committee, sub-committee or working party so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting;
  - v. 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 if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer 3 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
  - vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
  - vii. shall permit a committee/working party other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee/working party;
  - viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;
  - ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
  - x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
  - xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
  - xii. may dissolve a committee/sub-committee/Working party.
  - xiii. may, subject to the provisions of Order 4d above, at any time alter the terms of reference and membership of a committee, sub-committee or working party.
- e The Chairman of Council may not be Chairman of Personnel Committee
- f Advisory Committees, sub-committees and Working parties may not make decisions but they may make recommendations to the full Town Council
- g The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council shall be ex-officio non-voting members of every committee, sub-committee and working party. Any other Member of the Council may attend, and may speak at the invitation of the Chairman, at any meeting of a committee, sub-committee or working party but they may not vote

## **SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

- i. Substitute members may be nominated and appointed to a committee and the number is determined at the Annual Town Council meeting in May and:
  - (i) That all Committees will have substitute members if the appointed member cannot attend a meeting and without the attendance of a substitute member the meeting would be inquorate.
  - (ii) That as much notice as possible has to be given but notice can be given right up to the start of the meeting.
  - (iii) That a Town Councillor member can only substitute if apologies have been received from the committee member.
  - (iv) That it is not compulsory to substitute.
  - (v) That notice of a substitution is given to the Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk.
  - (vi) That once apologies have been received then that committee member cannot attend the meeting

## **5. 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 councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.**
- 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 in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council.**
- f **The Chairman of the Council, unless s/he 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 there is one, unless s/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, s/he shall preside at the annual 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 shall 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, s/he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. S/he may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- j Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:
  - i In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his/her acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;
  - ii Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
  - iii Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
  - iv Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
  - v Review of Terms of Reference and delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
  - vi Appointment of members to existing committees;
  - vii Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;
  - viii Appointment of Chairmen to Standing Committees
  - ix Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies
  - x In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
  - xi Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.
  - xii Review of the Council's Annual Statement of CIL receipts and CIL Expenditure

**6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a **The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time. The Vice Chairman may do so in the absence of the Chairman**
- b **If the Chairman of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or the sub-committee] at any time.
- d If the chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] does not call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by 2 members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any 2 members of the committee [or the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or a sub-committee].

**7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS**

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 8 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

**8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS**

- a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

**9. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER**

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 8 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c Motions on notice may not be moved during the pre-election period relating to the 4-yearly Election of a new Council
- d The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- e If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least 5 clear days before the meeting.
- f If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- g The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- h Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- i Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.
- j The Clerk shall insert in the summons for every meeting all notices of motion properly given in the order in which they have been received, unless the member giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that s/he intends to move at some later meeting or that s/he withdraws it
- k If the subject matter of a motion comes within the province of a Committee of the Council, it may upon being moved and seconded, stand referred to the relevant committee to determine for consideration together with a report from the Town Clerk.

**10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE**

a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:

- i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
- ii. to move to a vote;
- iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
- iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
- v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
- vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
- vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
- viii. to require a written report;
- ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
- x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
- xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
- xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
- xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
- xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
- xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
- xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii. to close the meeting.
- xviii. To invite a member having an interest in the subject matter under debate to remain.

b. **MOTIONS ON EXPENDITURE**

Any motion which, if carried, would, in the opinion of the Chairman, substantially increase the expenditure upon any service which is under the management of, or reduce the revenue at the disposal of, any committee, or which would involve capital expenditure, shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, and any committee affected by it shall consider whether it desires to report thereon.



## 11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

*See also standing order 20.*

- a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
- c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

## 12. DRAFT MINUTES

- Full Council meetings ●
- Committee meetings ●
- Sub-committee meetings ●

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i).
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, 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, s/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/her view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings."

- e **If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**
- f Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

### 13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

*See also standing order 3(u).*

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless s/he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which s/he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. S/he may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which s/he had the interest.
- c A Councillor or non-councillor with voting rights who has another interest other than a disclosable pecuniary interest shall, unless s/he has a dispensation, be permitted to participate in the discussion but may not vote.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e **A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.**
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
  - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
  - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
  - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
  - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.

- g Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required
- h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
  - i without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
  - ii granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or
  - iii it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation

#### 14. **CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS**

- a Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11, report this to the Council.
- b Where the notification in standing order 14(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d).
- c The Council may:
  - i provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
  - ii seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- d **Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

#### 15. **PROPER OFFICER**

- a The Proper Officer shall be the Town Clerk and in their absence the Deputy Town Clerk

- b The Proper Officer shall:
- i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
    - **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
    - **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**
- See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;*
- ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 8 days before the meeting confirming his/her withdrawal of it;
  - iii. **convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
  - iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
  - v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
  - vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
  - vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
  - viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
  - ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);
  - x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
  - xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
  - xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;

*(see also standing order 23);*

- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiv. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xv. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.  
*(see also standing order 23).*

## **URGENT BUSINESS**

- c. Where no meeting of the Town Council is scheduled within the necessary timescale to enable a decision concerning an urgent matter to be taken, the Town Clerk may, in consultation with the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Council, determine an urgent matter. All decisions taken under this standing order shall be reported to the next meeting of the Town Council for information, and the Town Clerk shall provide the necessary information, including reasons for urgency, to enable the Town Council to be satisfied that the delegated power has been used properly.

## **16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- a The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

## **17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

- a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
  - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
  - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.

- d The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

## 18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

- 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 keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
  - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
  - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
  - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
  - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below £30,000 due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. The Public Procurement (Agreement of Government Procurement) (Thresholds) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 came into force on 1 January 2024 and increases the threshold in sub paragraph a) for public works contracts from £5,336,937 to £5,372,609, and the threshold in sub-paragraph c) for goods and services from £213,477 to £214,904.
- d. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, amendments came into force on 21 December 2022 and increases the threshold over which contract must be competitively purchased from £25,000 to £30,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(f) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).**
- e. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or

the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:

- i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
  - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
  - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
  - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
  - v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
  - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- f. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- g. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (The Public Procurement (Agreement of Government Procurement) (Thresholds) (Amendment) Regulation 2021 came into force on 21 January 2022 and increases thresholds from £189,330 to £213,477 for a public services or supply of goods contract or in excess of £5,336,937 increased from £4,733,252 for a public works contract, the Council must comply with procurement rules.**
- h. **A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £363,424 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,551,413 for a works contract; or £820,370 for a social and other specific services contract shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.**

## 19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of the Personnel committee is subject to standing order 11.

- b The Chairman of Council or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairman, shall upon a resolution of Personnel Committee conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Town Clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by the Personnel committee
- c Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff shall contact the Chairman of the Personnel committee, or in their absence, the Vice-Chairman of the Personnel committee, in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Personnel committee
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Town Clerk relates to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Town Council this shall be communicated to the Chairman of Personnel which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Personnel Committee.
- e Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- f All staff matters will be referred to the Personnel Committee who will report the outcome of any Disciplinary or Grievance procedure to the Town Council under confidential business.

## 20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

*See also standing order 21.*

- a **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council**
- b *If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeds £200,000 The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.*

## 21. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION

(Below is not an exclusive list).

*See also standing order 11.*

- a The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
- b **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his/her personal data.**



- c **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- d **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**
- e **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

22. **RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA**

- a Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

23. **EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS**

*See also standing orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvii).*

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **Subject to standing order 23(a), the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two councillors who shall sign the deed as witnesses.**

24. **COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS**

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of the Unitary Council representing the area of the Council.

25. **RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**

- a. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:
  - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or

- ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

## **26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY**

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least 2 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.
- e During the lifetime of the Council, there will be a full review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

## **26 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE**

- a. The Town Council must decide at a full meeting of the Council, that it meets the criteria for eligibility at that particular point in time. A resolution to this effect must be written clearly in the minutes of that meeting.
- b. The Council is then required to revisit that decision and make a new resolution at every relevant annual meeting, this means that eligibility remains in place until the first annual meeting of the Council after the ordinary election (every 4 years).
- c. If a parish council resolves that that it meets the prescribed conditions, it shall be an eligible parish council for the duration of the eligibility period, i.e. it shall be eligible to use the General Power from the time that the resolution is passed until the day of the next annual meeting of that parish council (held after the resolution is passed) that takes place in a year of ordinary elections (the 'relevant annual meeting').

## **27 ELECTIONS**

Under the Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) (England and Wales) Rules 2006, Reg. 25, "the council of the parish or community may, not later than noon on the nineteenth day before the day of election, request the returning officer to issue official poll cards for that election". That the purchase of the poll cards be undertaken by the Town Clerk automatically each time there is a by-election.

Latest Amendment: 19th November 2024

Review Date: May 2026

Signed.......... Town Clerk

Signed.......... Chair of Council

19<sup>th</sup> November 2024

