

# **North Hinksey Parish Council**

## **STANDING ORDERS**

**MAY 2022**

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These Standing Orders were adopted at the Annual Meeting of North Hinksey Parish Council on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

### **Notes**

- Standing orders that are in bold type contain legal and statutory requirements.
- Standing orders not in bold are not statutory requirements but have been adopted to suit the working practices of North Hinksey Parish Council.
- The powers under the Coronavirus Act 2020 to hold virtual meetings lapsed on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 so meetings will be held in-person, subject to risk assessment. Access for members of the public will be provided via Zoom and in Person.

### **1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS**

- a 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.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.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 A councillor may move an amendment to his own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- h 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.
- i The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- j 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.
- k 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 last spoke;
  - iii. to make a point of order;

- iv. to give a personal explanation; or
  - v. to exercise a right of reply.
- l 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 considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- m A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- n 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.
- o 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 right of reply.
- p Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(n), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

## **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 of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting.**
- 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 Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of business on the agenda, but have no right to participate in the general proceedings of the Council, unless invited to do so by Council (the Chairman). To help create and sustain public interest in the Council's work a 15 minute period (which can in special circumstances be increased, if a majority of councillors agree) will be provided in all full Council and Committee meetings to put relevant questions. The Council will either provide a reply at the meeting or a written response after the meeting.
- f Parishioners may ask for clarification about any reply given at the meeting including a request for further detailed information on aspects of that specific topic which have only been revealed through the reply, but may not ask further questions that are not directly related to the reply.
- g Each question will be allocated a maximum of 5 minutes in total to be asked, and for the provision of any responses including clarification of the original response.
- h Questions must be notified in writing, (e-mail preferred), to the Chairman of the Council or Parish Clerk, no later than 72 hours before the scheduled start time of the relevant Council or Committee meeting.
- i It is expected that questions will be asked in a reasonable and polite manner. Where questions contain elements that are considered by the Parish Clerk to be

unacceptable then the parishioner will be informed of this fact and be asked to provide an acceptable version of the question in writing no later than 24 hours before the scheduled start time of the relevant Council or Committee meeting.

j Examples of unacceptable content include:

- Expletives or abusive comments towards individual Councillors or the Council as a whole (which the parishioner would be required to remove);
- Statements within the question that include patently incorrect or misleading information being portrayed as a definite fact (which the parishioner would be asked to correct).

It is also expected that in responding to questions Councillors should treat questioners with respect, in line with the Code of Conduct.

Should a delegation wish to discuss a notified matter with the Council, they should appoint a spokesperson to act on their behalf, prior to the meeting. Outside of formal Council meetings it is possible for members of the public to submit questions to the Parish Clerk or to a relevant Councillor at any time, and answers should subsequently be provided within a reasonable period of time. This practice should be encouraged as a more effective way for Council to provide requested information quickly in most circumstances.

k The procedure for presenting PETITIONS to council is as follows:-

- a). The petition must reach the Parish Clerk by 9am on the working day before the Parish Council meeting you wish to address.
- b). Petitioners should elect a spokesperson, who will have a maximum of 3 minutes to present the petition. Councillors will then be able to ask questions for clarification purposes, which may be fact finding or to establish the accuracy of information contained in or driving the petition.
- c). Following this the Chairman of the Parish Council will accept the petition and then refer it to the appropriate committee/sub-committee or advisory committee to consider its content and make any necessary investigations or contacts to allow for a meaningful judgement of the petitions request.
- d). Once the relevant committee or sub-committee or advisory committee has completed its investigation, it will report back to the council with recommendations via the relevant parent body where appropriate. Details of the date and time of the reporting process will be shown on the agenda papers of the Parish Council meeting and on the Parish Council website.
- e). For clarity purposes the petition should take the following format:
  - i). Heading: Details of what the petition is for or against.
  - ii). Information: Details of the information used or reasons given to petitioners which caused them to support the petition.
  - iii). The petition to also show the name and address (postcode as a minimum) of each person on the petition. Only individual names will

be considered. Single entries purporting to represent more than one person (groups of people) will not be taken into account. Where possible the signature of each person on the petition should be included, however for online petitions where that is not a possibility this will not be required.

#### I. Councillor Questions

A 15 minute period (which can in special circumstances be increased, if a majority of councillors agree) will be provided in all full Council and Committee meetings for Councillors to put relevant questions.

A maximum of three questions may be asked by any Councillor in a single meeting with no extra issues/questions raised within them, and initial questions from each Councillor will be answered in the order in which they have been received by the Council. If sufficient time is available then second questions, and subsequently third questions may be asked in the same order.

Councillors may ask for clarification about any reply given at the meeting including a request for further detailed information on aspects of that specific topic which have only been revealed through the reply, but may not ask further questions that are not directly related to the reply.

Each question will be allocated a maximum of 5 minutes in total to be asked and for the provision of any responses, including clarification of the original response.

Questions must be notified in writing, (e-mail if preferred), to the Chairman of the Council or Parish Clerk, no later than 72 hours before the scheduled start time of the relevant Council or Committee meeting.

It is expected that questions will be asked in a reasonable and polite manner and Councillors need to consider the Code of Conduct in this respect. Where questions contain elements that are considered by the Parish Clerk to be unacceptable then the Councillor will be informed of this fact and be asked to provide an acceptable version of the question in writing no later than 24 hours before the scheduled start time of the relevant Council or Committee meeting.

Examples of unacceptable content include:

- expletives or abusive comments towards individual Councillors or the Council as a whole (which the Councillor would be required to remove);
- statements within the question that include patently incorrect or misleading information being portrayed as a definite fact (which the Councillor would be asked to correct).

It is also expected that in responding to questions Councillors should treat questioners with respect, in line with the Code of Conduct.

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

Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

A person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer.

Where Councillor Questions are included they will be towards the end of each agenda to ensure there is sufficient time to include priority business. In the event that the number of agenda items is expected to exceed the maximum meeting time the Chairman may defer Councillor Questions to a subsequent meeting.

- m A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- n 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.
- o **Subject to standing order 3(v), 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.**
- p **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- q **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.**
- r **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 absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one).**
- s **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.**
- t **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.**
- u **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 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.*

- v **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 vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before the vote takes place.

- w The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
  - i. the time 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.

- x **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.**

- y **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.**

- z **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 adjourned to another meeting.

aa A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 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, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
- 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;
  - v. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
  - vi. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
  - vii. 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;
  - viii. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
  - ix. 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;
  - x. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
  - xi. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.
- e Terms of Reference for Committees, Sub-Committees and Advisory (sometimes called Working Groups) Committees
- The terms of reference for all committees etc. are detailed in the policy document 'Terms of Reference for NHPC Committees, Sub-Committees and Advisory Committees (Working Groups)'. If there is any conflict between this document and the Terms of Reference then this document takes precedence.
- f Delegation to Committees
- Authority to take decisions on behalf of full Council can be delegated to specific Committees under a remit as agreed by full Council. Any such delegated powers should be noted within one or more of NHPC's Policies, primarily the Terms of

Reference for Committees.

## **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. **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 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 there is one, 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 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, he shall preside at the annual 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 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 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 delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
- vi. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
- vii. Appointment of members to existing committees;
- viii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;
- ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
- x. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.
- xi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
- xii. 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;
- xiii. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
- xiv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
- xv. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
- xvi. Review of the Council's complaints procedure;
- xvii. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (see also *standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);
- xviii. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
- xix. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;
- xx. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.
- xxi. Determining the time and choice of media of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

**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.**
- 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. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY**

- a The following matters are reserved for decision by full Council, notwithstanding that appropriate Committee(s) may make recommendations thereon for the Council's consideration:
  - Setting the annual precept
  - Borrowing money
  - Approval of the Council's Annual Accounts and completion of the Annual Return
  - Making, amending or revoking Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and all other NHPC Policy documents
  - Making, amending or revoking bye-laws
  - Making of orders under statutory powers
  - Prosecution or defence in a court of law
- b Additional matters as identified by legislation may also require the approval of full Council, and these cannot be delegated to an Officer or any subdivision of the Council (e.g. a Committee or Sub-Committee).
- c Other matters not included above may be delegated by full Council as they see fit to individuals or bodies as allowed by legislation (primarily to Officers and Committees / Sub-Committees), however full Council may at any time revoke such delegation of authority either completely, or solely for specific matters that they wish to make decisions on.

## **9. 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.

**10. 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 5 clear working days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c 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.
- d 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.
- e 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.
- f The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

**11. 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.

## **12. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION**

*See also standing order 21.*

- 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.**

## **13. 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 11(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 Council at the next available meeting of the Council in person and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d The draft minutes of full Council and Committee meetings shall be immediately published on the website following agreement with the Chairman.

#### **14 CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS**

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless 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 he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c Unless 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 he has another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- 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 14(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 14(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.**

#### **15. 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 12, report this to the Council.
- b** 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;**
- c** **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.**

#### **16. PROPER OFFICER**

- a** The Proper Officer shall be the 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, and instructions on how to link to the remote meeting the agenda and,**
    - Provide, in a conspicuous place or by publishing on the website of the body or, for a parish council, on the website of the principal council within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1972 public notice of the time, place and agenda.**
- LAPCP Regulations 2020 Part 1 Reg 13 (a)

*See standing order 3(e) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(f) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;*

- ii. subject to standing order 10, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 5 working days before the meeting confirming his 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 24);*
- 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. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a spreadsheet for such purpose;
- xv. ensure all planning applications are referred to the next Planning Committee Meeting or, by agreement of the Planning Committee Chairman, seek an extension to the deadline for comments if required
- xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme;
- xviii. Delegation of urgent matters: *See Financial Regulations 3.4, 5.11 and 5.12 for Clerk/RFO's authority to spend and authorise payments between meetings*

## **17. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the

Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

**18. 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 The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
  - i. the Council’s receipts and payments for each quarter;
  - ii. the Council’s aggregate receipts and payments for the year to date;
  - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported andwhich includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- d 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 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.
- e 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) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. 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<sup>th</sup> June.

**19. 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 **£25,000** 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. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 19(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).**
- d. 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.
- e. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- f. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £181,302 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £4,551,413 for a public works contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU.**

- g. **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 (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.**

**20. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS**

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council is subject to standing order 12.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the Chairman (or in his absence the Vice Chairman) of the Council of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Council at its next meeting.
- c The Chairman (or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman) shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of Clerk/RFO. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by Council.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff shall contact the Chairman (or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman) in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of Council.
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the staff member relates to the Chairman or Vice Chairman, this shall be communicated to another member of the Council, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.
- f 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.
- g In accordance with standing order 12(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 20(f).

**21. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION**

*See also standing order 22.*

- 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.**

**22. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION**

(Below is not an exclusive list).

*See also standing order 12.*

- 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 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.**

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

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.

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

A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.

**Subject to standing order 23, any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

**25. COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillor(s) of the District and County Council representing the area of the Council.

**26. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**

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.

**27. 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 8 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 10.

- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to councillors 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.

**28. COUNCIL POLICY DOCUMENTS**

In addition to these Standing Orders the Parish Council has agreed policies covering the following issues: -

Climate Change

Code of Conduct

Committee Terms of Reference

Complaints Handling

Date Protection (Privacy Notice and Privacy Policy)

Disciplinary Policy

Document Storage, Retention & Disposal Policy

E-Mail

Equal Opportunities

Financial Regulations

Freedom of Information

Graffiti

Grievance Policy

Health & Safety

Press & Media Relations

Protocol on Councillor-Employee Relations

Recruitment

Sickness & Absence Policy

Social Media

Terms of Reference for Committees

Vexatious Complaints

Website