

# Chalfont St Peter Parish Council



## Standing Orders

Based on the Model Standing Orders published by the National Association of  
Local Councils (NALC) 2018

Record of Changes

Date	Change
April 2012	Completely revised for clarity based on model Standing Orders, and taking forward specific items from previous versions. Approved by Full Council on 28 June 2012
July 2012	Code of Conduct; adoption of new Standing Order in respect of members disclosable pecuniary interests Approved by Full Council on 26 July 2012
Oct 2012	Revised Code of Conduct adopted.
Oct 2013	Section 1s. Changed quorum requirements for Main Council from 10 to 8. Agreed Main Council September 2013 (Pt 85)
Oct 2015	Original 1i taken out with regards rules on recording of meetings. This is due to a change in legislation.
Sept 2018	Completely revised for clarity based on the new NALC model Standing Orders, and taking forward specific items from previous versions. Approved by Full Council on 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2018

## Index of Model Standing Orders

Standing Order		Page		Standing Order		Page
1	Rules of Debate at Meetings	5		19	Handling Staff Matters	24
2	Disorderly Conduct at Meetings	7		20	Responsibilities to Provide Information	26
3	Meetings Generally	7		21	Responsibilities Under Data Protection Legislation	26
4	Committees & Sub-Committees	10		22	Relationships with the Press/Media	27
5	Ordinary Council Meetings	12		23	Execution and Sealing of Legal Deeds	27
6	Extraordinary Meetings of the Council, Committees and Sub Committees	14		24	Communicating with District and County or Unitary Councillors	27
7	Previous Resolutions	14		25	Restrictions on Councillor Activities	28
8	Voting on Appointments	15		26	Standing Orders Generally	28
9	Motions for a Meeting That Require Written Notice to be Given to the Proper Officer	15				
10	Motions at a Meeting That Do No Require Written Notice	16				
11	Management of Information	17				
12	Draft Minutes	18				
13	Code of Conduct and Dispensations	18				
14	Code of Conduct Complaints	20				
15	Proper Officer	21				
16	Responsible Financial Officer	22				
17	Accounts & Accounts Statements	22				
18	Financial Control and Procurement	23				

# INTRODUCTION

These model standing orders update the National Association of Local Council (NALC) model standing orders contained in “Local Councils Explained” by Meera Tharmarajah (© 2013 NALC). 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**

## **(Council, Committee & Sub Committees)**

- 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 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 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 an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- 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.
- 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 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 considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his 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 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 under discussion and shall not exceed 5 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.
- u No discussion shall take place upon the Minutes except concerning their accuracy. Corrections of the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialed by the Chairman.
- v **A Member shall raise his hand to indicate to the Chairman that he/ she wishes to speak.**
- w **Members shall address the Chairman. If two or more members raise their hands, the**

Chairman shall address each Member in turn to speak.

## 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 OR [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 the

business on the agenda.

- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 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 5 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. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- j 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.
- k **Subject to standing order 3(m), 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.**
- l **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- m **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.**
- n **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).**
- o **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.**
- p **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.**

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- q **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.**
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- *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.*
- r **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 moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- s 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.
- t **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.**
- u **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 council meeting be less than five.**

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

- v **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.
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- w A meeting shall not exceed a period of 3 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, at its Annual Meeting, appoint Standing Committees for Amenities & Planning; Communications & PR; Finance; Human Resources; Open Spaces and may at any other time appoint such other Committees as may be necessary, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf, 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. 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. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be ex-officio Members of every Committee, of which they are not full Members with the right to speak, to propose and to second but not to vote.
  - vii. Every Committee at its first meeting following the Annual Parish Meeting (ie The

May meeting) before proceeding to any other business, shall elect a Chairman, and may elect a Vice-Chairman to serve until the next Annual Meeting only. The first meeting, therefore, needs to be conducted by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Council, as clearly at that point there is no Chairman to that Committee.

- 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 **four**;
- 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
- xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.
- xi The Chairman of a Committee or the Chairman of the Council may summon a special meeting of that Committee at any time. A special meeting shall also be summoned on the requisition in writing of not less than 4 Members of the Committee. The summons shall set out the business to be considered at that special meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting. Every Committee may appoint Sub-Committees for the purpose to be specified by the Committee, but it shall not delegate its powers to a Sub-Committee.

## **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 7.30pm.**
- 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. Public question time
  - iii. To receive apologies of absence
  - iv. Disclosure of interest by Members (and employees) in items on the agenda
  - v. After consideration, to approve by signature of the Minutes by the presiding Chairman as a correct record
  - vi. To answer questions on matters arising from the Minutes and from any communications
  - vii. To receive such communications as the presiding Chairman may wish to lay before the Council
  - viii. To receive an update from the Clerk on matters of the Council
  - ix. To receive, discuss and consider for adoption, reports, minutes and recommendations of Committees. The approval of the accuracy of the Committee minutes should be presented by the relevant Committee Members.
  - x. To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done
  - xi. To receive and consider reports by Members and representatives of Sub-Committees, working parties, community or other collaborative groups
  - xii. To approve the cheques for the current month

- xiii. To receive information items
- xiv. To discuss if required any items of a confidential nature. Exclusion of the public is executed by the Public Bodies Admissions of Meetings Act 1960 SI.

- K A motion to vary the order of business on the grounds of urgency;
  - i) May be proposed by the Chairman or any Member and if proposed by the Chairman may be out to the vote without being seconded, and,
  - ii) Shall be put to the vote without discussion.

## 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 (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least one third of the members of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a Committee, unless new evidence comes to light that was not considered at the time.
- 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 (7) clear 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 (7 ) 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.
- i If a motion specified in the summons be not moved, it shall unless postponed by the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice
- j A movement must be proposed and seconded to become a resolution.
- k A motion moved on notice and seconded may be resolved at that meeting, referred to a Committee or deferred to a later date at the discretion of the Council.

- I Non-urgent motions which Members wish to propose should have any background papers attached and circulated with the summons, or be presented by the Member, Committee or those with relevant information.

## 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 approve the absences of Councillors in some circumstances
- xix. to dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting
- xx. To authorise legal deeds to be signed by two Councillors and witnessed
- xxi. To authorise the payment of monies up to £500
- xxii. To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under

consideration. This shall not have the effect of nullifying it.

xxiii. To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by Standing Orders.

xxiv. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.

xxv. To answer questions from Councillors.

- b If a motion falls within the terms of reference of a Committee or Sub-Committee or within the delegated powers conferred on an employee, a referral of the same may be made to such Committee or Sub-Committee or employee provided that the Chairman may direct for it to be dealt with at the present meeting for reasons of urgency or expedience.

## 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, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

“The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the ( ) held on [date] in respect of ( ) were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- e 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 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 the Proper Officer] OR [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 [by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required] OR [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:**
  - a. **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;**
  - b. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
  - c. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**
- i **All Councillors shall receive and undertake training in the code of conduct within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.**
- j **The Clerk is required to compile and hold a Register of Members' Interests.**

## 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/her. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**
- e Where a notification relates to a complaint made by an employee (not being the Proper Officer) the Proper Officer shall ensure that the employee in question does not deal with any aspect of the complaint.
- f The subject matter of notifications shall be confidential and, insofar as it is possible to do so by law, the Council (including the Proper Officer and the Chairman or Vice-Chairman shall take the steps set out below, together with other steps considered necessary, to maintain confidentiality.
- Draft the summonses and agendas in such a way that the identity and subject matter of the complaint are not disclosed.
  - Ensure that any background papers containing the information set out in Standing Order 14(a) above are not made public.
  - Ensure that the public and press are excluded from meetings as appropriate.
  - Ensure that the minutes of meetings preserve confidentiality.
  - Consider any liaison that may be required with the person or body with statutory responsibility for the investigation of the matter.
- g Standing Order 14(f) above should not be taken to prohibit the Council (whether through the Proper Officer or the Chairman or Vice-Chairman from disclosing information to Members and officers of the Council or to other persons where such disclosure is necessary to deal with the complaint or is required by law.
- h The Chairman or Vice Chairman subject to approval by a meeting of the full Council shall have the power to grant the member involved a financial indemnity in respect of legal costs, which shall, in accordance with the law be.
- i References in Standing Order 14 to a notification shall be taken to refer to a communication of any kind which relates to a breach or an alleged breach of the code of conduct by a Councillor.

## 15. **PROPER OFFICER**

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- 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 ( ) 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 Councilor'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;/ Clerk
- 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. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;

- xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the [Chairman or in his absence the Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council] OR [Chairman or in his absence Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the ( ) Committee] within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of [the Council] OR [( ) committee];
- xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme
- xvii. action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in Standing Orders.

## 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 1 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. 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 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 **£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 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.**
- 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. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
  - iv. 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;
  - v. 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.**

## 19. **HANDLING STAFF MATTERS**

A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of [Council] OR [the (HR) committee] is subject to standing order 11.

### a) **Clerk related HR Matter**

- i. If the Clerk has any HR issues that the Clerk wants to raise in relation to their own employment, then they must raise it with the HR Chairman (not in HR Committee).
- ii. The HR Chairman will then take it to the HR Committee, but the Clerk will be excluded unless the Committee thinks that their presence will be required
- iii. If the matter needs to be referred to main Council, then it will be recommended to main Council by the HR Committee (again with the Clerk and public excluded)
- iv. If necessary, main Council will refer the matter back to HR who can then address the issue directly with the Clerk on behalf of Council. This can be done face to face or in a letter or both (HR to decide depending on the issue). The final decision will be given verbally and in writing.
- v. Any issues which may be classified as a 'grievance' should be dealt with under the policy guidelines for staff grievances detailed in the Staff Handbook.

### b) **Staff related HR Matters**

- vi. The Clerk can raise staff HR issues in HR Committee
- vii. HR Committee will then recommend to main Council, if required
- viii. Main Council can discuss with Clerk present but public excluded

### c) **Attendance of non HR Members to the HR Committee**

There may be occasions when a non HR Councillor or other professional person may be required to provide additional information in order for the HR Committee to fully discuss a matter. When this occurs:

- ix. The HR Chairman will propose the person to attend to other Members of the HR Committee with an explanation as why they are required, prior to the meeting.
- x. If the majority of the HR Committee is in agreement, then the nominated person will attend and the reason for their attendance will be noted.
- xi. The nominated person will only attend for the relevant parts of the meeting which will be outlined in the Chairman's proposal.
- xii. If the HR Committee votes to exclude the nominated person, that person can take the issue to main Council for a second opinion.

**d) Requests made by non HR Members to attend the HR Committee**

There may be occasions when a non-HR Councillor may request to attend an HR Committee. When this occurs:

- xiii. The person making the request will contact the HR Chairman with their reason for attending the meeting, no later than 2 days prior to the date of the meeting.
  - xiv. The HR Chairman will propose the person to other Members of the HR Committee, with an explanation as to why they have requested to attend the meeting.
  - xv. If the majority of the HR Committee is in agreement, then the person will attend and the reason for their attendance will be noted
  - xvi. The person will only attend for the relevant parts of the meeting which will be outlined in the Chairman's proposal.
  - xvii. If the HR Committee votes to exclude the person, that person can take the issue to main Council for a second opinion.
- a 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.
  - c In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).

**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. The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

- c Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman. The Council shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 including exercising the powers of the Proper Officer in respect of Freedom of Information requests.

## 21. **RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION**

(Below is not an exclusive list).

*See also standing order 11.*

- a. **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**
- b. **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- c. **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.**
- d. **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.**
- e. **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.
- b The public and the Press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its Committees, which may however, temporarily exclude the public or the press or both by means of the following resolution: -
  - 'that in view of the (special) or (confidential) nature if the business about to be transacted, it is in the opinion of this Council, advisable in the public interest that the (press) (press and public) (public) be temporarily excluded and that they are instructed to withdraw' (see Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960).
- c In accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media, Councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media without reference to the Chairman, Vice-Chairman of Council and Chairman, Vice Chairman of Comms & PR.

## 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), any two Councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.]**

*The above is applicable to a Council without a common seal.*

## 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 District and County Council OR Unitary Council representing the area of the Council.

## 25. 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.

## 26. CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY COUNCILLORS

- a Canvassing Councillors or the Members of a Committee or Sub-Committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from such an appointment. The Proper Officer shall disclose the requirements of this Standing Order to every candidate.
- b A Councillor or a Member of a Committee or Sub-Committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council or recommend a person for such appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such person may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.
- c This Standing Order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.
- d No Councillors shall undertake paid work for the Council

## 28. **INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS**

- a Subject to Standing Orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a Councillor may, for the purpose of his official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a Committee or a Sub-Committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its Committees or Sub-Committees shall be available for inspection by Councillors during reasonable hours of the working day.

## 29. **CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

- a Councillors and employees shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware is, of a confidential nature.
- b A Councillor in breach of the provisions of Standing Order above may be removed from a Committee or a Sub-Committee by a resolution of the Council.
- c All reports and other documents and all proceedings of Committees shall be treated as confidential unless and until they become public in the ordinary course of Council business.

## 30. **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 ( ) 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 A Councillor's failure to observe Standing Orders more than 3 times in one meeting may result in him/ her being excluded from the meeting in accordance with SOs.
- f A member may ask the Chairman any question concerning the business of the Council.