



# Odiham

## Parish Council

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# 1. Meetings

Mandatory for full Council meetings ●

Mandatory for committee meetings ■

Mandatory for sub-committee meetings ▲

## Note

a) *Different symbol shapes are used to facilitate printing on black and white printers.*

b) *Mandatory items are in bold.*

c) *Changes to model Standing Orders relevant only to Odiham Parish Council are in italics*

<span style="color: red;">●</span>	a	<b>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>
<span style="color: red;">●</span> <span style="color: orange;">■</span>	b	<b>The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the 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.</b>
<span style="color: red;">●</span> <span style="color: orange;">■</span>	c	<b>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.</b>
<span style="color: red;">■</span> <span style="color: orange;">■</span>	d	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.
	e	The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with Standing Order 1 (d) shall not exceed <i>10 minutes</i> unless directed by the Chairman of the meeting.
	f	Subject to Standing Order 1 (e) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than <i>3 minutes</i> .
	g	In accordance with Standing Order 1(d) above, 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.
	h	A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
	i	A person shall raise his or her hand when requesting to speak and, <i>if required by the Chairman</i> , stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort).
	j	Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Chairman.

	k	Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak the Chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
● ■	l	<b>Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is permitted due to the amendment on 6 August 2014 of the 1960 Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act by The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014.</b> Please see the approved protocol for public and press reporting at council meetings.
● ■	m	<b>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.</b>
●	n	<b>The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman, if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.</b>
● ■ ▲	o	<b>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 or her casting vote whether or not he or she gave an original vote.</b> (See also standing orders 2 (i) and (j) below.)
● ■ ▲	p	<b>Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors or Councillors with voting rights present and voting.</b>
●	q	<b>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 or her vote for or against that question.</b> Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
● ■ ▲	r	The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. the time and place of the meeting;</li> <li>ii. the names of Councillors present and absent;</li> <li>iii. interests that have been declared by Councillors;</li> <li>iv. whether a Councillor left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;</li> <li>v. if there was a public participation session; and</li> <li>vi. the resolutions made.</li> </ul>
● ■ ▲	s	<b>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 or her right to participate and vote on that matter.</b>
● ■	t	<b>The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to Councillors in respect of the entire meeting.</b>

▲		
● ■ ▲	u	<b>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 3.</b>
● ■ ▲	v	<b>If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted</b> and the meeting shall be adjourned. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
	w	A meeting or a series of meetings on a single occasion shall not exceed a period of <i>2 hours</i> .
	x	<i>The Chairman of the meeting may allow experts in a specific field to address the meeting to offer advice on agenda items for a period of 5 minutes.</i>

## 2. Ordinary Council meetings

- a In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new Councillors elected take office.
- b In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such a day in May as the Council may direct.
- c If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 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 directs.
- e The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.
- f The Chairman of the Council, unless he or she has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his or her successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- g The Vice-Chairman of the Council, unless he or she resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- h In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he or she shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- i In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he or she shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He or she may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

- j **Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows:**
- i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chairman 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 his or her acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date.**
  - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council and to receive and note minutes of and/or to determine recommendations made by committees;
  - iii. Review the terms of reference for committees and the delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and local authorities;
  - iv. Appointment of members to existing committees;
  - v. Appointment of any new committees, confirmation of the terms of reference, the number of members (including, if appropriate, substitute Councillors) and receipt of nominations to them;
  - vi. Appointment of the Chair of committee's;
  - vii. Review and adoption of appropriate Standing Orders and Financial Regulations;
  - viii. Review of arrangements, including any charters, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities;
  - ix. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
  - x. *If applicable*, in an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
  - xi. Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment;
  - xii. Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks;
  - xiii. Review of the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies;
  - xiv. Review of the Council's complaints procedure;
  - xv. Review of the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998;
  - xvi. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
  - xvii. Review of the Council's Protocol for Public and Press Reporting at meetings;
  - xviii. Review of the Council's Social Media Policy;
  - xix. Review of the Council's Data Protection Policy;
  - xx. Review of the Council's Document Retention Policy;
  - xxi. Review of the Council's Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure;
  - xxii. Review of the Council's Reserves Policy;
  - xxiii. Review of the Council's Press and Media Policy;
  - xxiv. Setting the dates, time and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council up to and

including the next annual meeting of full Council.

NOTE: A Councillor does not have to be present to be appointed as Chairman, to a Committee or as Chair of a Committee but must have indicated prior to the meeting in writing to the Clerk that they wish to be considered for this appointment. They will need to be nominated and seconded by Councillors present at the meeting.

### 3. 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.** *The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be voting members of every committee.*
- 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. *All committees and sub-committees of the Council act with the full power and authority of the Council in lawfully discharging functions that fall within their respective terms of reference.*
- e. 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 full Council;
  - iii. shall permit a committee other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee to determine the number and times of its meetings;
  - iv. shall subject to standing order 3 (b) and (c) above, appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
  - v. may subject to standing order 3 (b) and (c) above 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 *7 days* before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
  - vi. shall after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the Chair of the standing committee;
  - vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee to appoint its own Chair at the first meeting;
  - viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and sub-committee which shall be no less than 3;

- ix. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance notice requirement, if any, required for the meeting 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;
- xi. may dissolve a committee.

## **4. Extraordinary meetings of the council, committee 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 or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within 7 days of having been requested in writing to do so by 2 Councillors, any 2 Councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the 2 Councillors.**
- c The Chair of a committee (or a sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee at any time.
- d If the Chair of a committee (or a sub-committee) does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting *within 5 days* of having been requested by to do so by 2 Councillors, any 2 Councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee (or a sub-committee).

## **5. Rules of debate at meetings**

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be voted upon unless it has been proposed 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 seconded 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 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 or her own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder.
- 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.
- j Subject to Standing Order 5 (k) below, 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 substantive motion.
- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of the debate on it.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the first original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate of 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 or she last spoke;
  - iii. to make a point of order;
  - iv. to give a personal explanation;
  - v. in exercise of a right of reply.
- p During the debate of a motion, a Councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the Councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A Councillor raising a point of order shall identify the Standing Order which he considers has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman and his or her decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
  - i. to amend the motion;
  - ii. to proceed to the next business;
  - iii. to adjourn the debate;
  - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
  - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
  - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
  - vii. to exclude the public and press;
  - viii. to adjourn the meeting;
  - ix. to suspend particular Standing Order(s), except those which reflect mandatory statutory requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the Chairman shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion

under debate has exercised or waived his or her right of reply.

- t Excluding motions moved under Standing Order 5 (r) above, the contribution 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.

## 6. 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 the person(s) disregard the request of the Chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any Councillor or the Chairman may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made in accordance with Standing Order 6(b) above is ignored, the Chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

## 7. Previous resolutions

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 2 *Councillors* to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with Standing Order 9 below, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to Standing Order 7 (a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

## 8. Voting on appointments

Where more than 2 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 removed from 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 voting may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the Chairman.

## 9. Motions requiring written notice

- a 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 Council's Proper Officer at least 7 *clear days* before the next meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- b The Proper Officer may, before including a motion in the agenda received in accordance with Standing Order 9(a) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in

- the wording of the motion.
- c If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with Standing Order 9(a) above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer in clear and certain language at least *7 clear* days before the meeting.
  - d If the wording or nature 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 or rejected in the agenda.
  - e Subject to Standing Order 9(d) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
  - f Motions received shall be recorded in a book or electronic document for that purpose and numbered in the order that they are received.
  - g Motions rejected shall be recorded in a book or electronic document for that purpose with an explanation by the Proper Officer for their rejection.
  - h A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for 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.

## 10. Motions not requiring written notice

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 and approve them;
- 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 sensitive 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 requirements);
- xvi. To adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii. To close the meeting.

## 11. Handling confidential or sensitive information

- a The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not be disclosed or otherwise undermine confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.
- b Councillors and staff shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information which for a special reason would not be in the public interest.

## 12. Draft minutes

- a If a copy of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting has been circulated to 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 of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the minutes shall be raised in accordance with Standing Order 10 (i) above.
- 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 or she shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:  
“The Chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the ( ) held on [date] in respect of ( ) were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the majority of the ( ) and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- e Upon 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 1 (t).

- a All Councillors shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless he or she has been granted a dispensation, a Councillor shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he or she has a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which the Councillor had the interest.
- c Unless he or she has been granted a dispensation, a Councillor shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he or she has another interest if so

required by the Council's Code of Conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which the Councillor 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;
  - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to Standing Orders 13 (d) and (f) above, dispensation requests shall be considered by the Proper Officer before a 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 a sub-committee for which the dispensation is required.
- h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with Standing Order 7 (e) above. Having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:**
  - 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; or**
  - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interest of persons living in the Council's area; or**
  - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

## 14. Code of conduct complaints

- a Upon receipt by the District Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a Councillor has breached the Council's Code of Conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to Standing Order 11 above, report this to the Council.
- b Where the notification relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of the 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 to what action, if any, to take in accordance with Standing Order 14 (d) below
- c The Council may:
  - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;

- 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 Council that a Councillor has breached the Council's Code of Conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him or her. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

## 15. Proper Officer

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the Clerk or (ii) other staff members(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence.
- b The Proper Officer shall:
  - i. **At least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council, a committee and a sub-committee serve on Councillors a summons by email confirming the time, place and the agenda provided any such email contains the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer;**
  - ii. **Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by Councillors is signed by them);**
  - iii. Subject to Standing Order 9 above, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a Councillor has given written notice at least 7 days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;
  - iv. **Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
  - v. Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings;
  - vi. **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
  - vii. **Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from Councillors;**
  - viii. Retain a copy of every Councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection;
  - ix. Keep proper records required before and after meetings;
  - x. Process all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the Council's procedures relating to the same;
  - xi. Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
  - xii. Manage the organisation, storage of and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form;
  - xiii. Arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
  - xiv. Arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's Financial

- Regulations;
- xv. Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority electronically;
  - xvi. Refer a planning application received by the Council to all members of the planning committee within 2 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 planning committee;
  - xvii. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders.

## 16. 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

## 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, i.e. signed by 2 Councillors.
- 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 summarising:
  - 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 a quarter being reported and which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlight any actual or potential overspends.
- d As soon as possible after the financial year end 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 full Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 1 of the annual 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 applying the form of accounts determined by the Council (income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March. A completed draft annual return shall be presented to each Councillor before the end of the following month of May. The annual return for the Council, which is subject to external audit including the annual governance statement shall be presented to 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 accounting records and systems of internal control;
  - 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 for payments;
  - v. procurement policies.
- b Financial Regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.

## 19. Handling staff matters

- a *If at a meeting there arises any question relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service for any person employed by the Council, it shall not be considered until the Council or committee has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded.*
- b A matter personal to an employee that is being considered by a meeting of the Council is subject to Standing Order 11 above.
- c Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior employee shall notify the Chair of the Council of any absence occasioned by illness or urgency and that person shall report such absence to the Council at its next meeting.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior employee (or other employees) shall contact the Chair of the Council in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance and disciplinary matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by an employee relates to the Chair of the Council, this shall be communicated to the Vice Chair 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 the written records of all meetings relating to performance, and capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters as confidential and secure.
- g The Council shall keep written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be securely locked away and electronic records shall be password protected.
- h Records documenting reasons for an employee's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for

the same.

- i Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to employee records referred to in Standing Orders 19(f) and (g) above if so justified.
- j *In ever year, not later than the meeting at which the estimates for next year are settled, the Council shall review the pay and conditions of service of existing employees.*

## 20. Requests for information

- a All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- b Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman *of the Council* who shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## 21. Relations with the press/media

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

## 22. Execution and sealing of legal deeds

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution.
- b **In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 22 (a) above, any 2 Councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

## 23. Communication with District Councillors

- a 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.
- b Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter sent to the County or District Council shall be sent to the ward Councillor representing the area of the Council.

## 24. Restrictions on Councillor activities

Unless authorised by a resolution, 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.

## 25. Standing Orders generally

- a All or part of a Standing Order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements (**in bold**) may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to permanently add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's Standing Orders not mandatory by law shall not be carried unless two-thirds of the Councillors at a meeting of the Council vote in favour of the same.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's Standing Orders to a Councillor upon delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.
- d The Chairman's decision as to the application of Standing Orders at meetings shall be final.

## 26. Estimates/precepts

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