



STANDING ORDERS
Adopted by Charing Parish Council at
Its meeting on 11th July 2017.

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1. 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 excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 1(b) above 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.

2. Meetings generally

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

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice**
- ■ d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from**


- e **part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- f 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.
- g A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- h "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.
- h **"A person may not orally report or comment about a meeting as it takes place if they are present at the meeting of a parish council or its committees but otherwise may:**
 - a) **film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting;**
 - b) **use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later;**
 - c) **report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting.**
- i **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.**
- j **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 any).**
- k **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.**
- l **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.**


-  m **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 they gave an original vote.**

See standing orders 4(i) and (j) below for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the council.

- n **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.

- o 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 present and absent;
 - iii. if there was a public participation session; and
 - iv. the resolutions made-

-  p **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.**

-  q **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**

-  r **"If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted**

- r **" Immediately after any vote is taken at a budget decision meeting of an authority there must be recorded in the minutes of the proceedings of that meeting the names of the persons who cast a vote for the decision or against the decision or who abstained from voting.**

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.**
- c Unless the council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:**
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;**
 - ii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;**
 - iii. may, subject to standing orders 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;**
 - iv. may dissolve a committee.**

4. 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 that not an election year, the annual meeting of a council shall be held on such day in May as the council may direct.**
- c If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the council shall take place at 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 (if any) of the Council.**
- f The Chairman of the Council, unless they have resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at**

- c the next annual meeting of the council.
- d **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless they resign 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.**
- e **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the council, they 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.**
- f **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the council, they shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. They 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.**
- g Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman (if any) of the Council at the annual meeting of the council, the business of the annual meeting shall include:
 - i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the council;
 - iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
 - iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
 - v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
 - vi. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
 - vii. Review of arrangements, including any charters and agency agreements, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities;
 - viii. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
 - ix. 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;
 - x. Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment;
 - xi. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks;
 - xii. Review of the council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
 - xiii. Review of the council's complaints procedure;
 - xiv. Review of the council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of



Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998;
xv. Review of the council's policy for dealing with the press/media.

5. Extraordinary meetings of the council and 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 or refuses to 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 must 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 or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested by to do so by 2 members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any 2 members of the committee [and the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee [and a sub-committee].**

6. 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.**

7. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer

- 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 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.
- b The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 7(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 7(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 so that it can be understood at least 7 clear days before the meeting.
- d 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.
- e Subject to standing order 7(d) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.

8. 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 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 to close a meeting.

9. Handling confidential or sensitive information

- a The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose 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 special reasons would not be in the public interest.

10. Draft minutes

- 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) 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.

11. Code of conduct and dispensations

See also standing order 2(o) above.

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- b 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.**
- b A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made [by the Proper Officer] and that decision is final.
- c 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.
- d Subject to standing orders 11(b) and (d) above, dispensations requests 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.
- e A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 11(d) above if 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 interests of persons living in the council's area or**
 - iii. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

12. Code of conduct complaints

- a Upon notification by the District [County Borough] OR [County 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 9 above, report this to the council.
- b Where the notification in standing order 12(a) above 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 12(d) below].
- c The council may:
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an
 - ii. investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
 - iii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- d **Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

13. 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 and a sub-committee, serve on councillors, by delivery or post at their residences, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda, or by email, confirming the time, place and the agenda provided any such email contains the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer.**
See standing order 2(b) above for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 2(c) above for a meeting of a committee.
 - ii. **give public notice of the time, place and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee (provided**

- iii. **that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the council convened by councillors is signed by them);**
See standing order 2(b) above for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 2(c) above for a meeting of a committee.
- iv. subject to standing order 7 above, include on 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;
- v. **convene a meeting of full council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
- vi. facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;
- vii. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- viii. retain acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- ix. retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- x. assist with responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the council's policies and 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, access to and destruction of information held by the council in paper and electronic form;
- xiii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
See also standing order 20 below.
- xiv. arrange or manage 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 in a book for such purpose;
- xvi. refer a planning application received by the council to the Chairman or in his absence Vice-Chairman (if any) of the (Planning) 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]

14. 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.

15. 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 (England).
- 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 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.
- d The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and applying the form of accounts determined by the council (receipts and payments, or 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 of 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.

16. Handling staff matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of council OR the Personnel committee is subject to standing order 9 above-
- b The chairman of [the Personnel committee or in their absence, the vice-chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and is subject to approval by resolution by the Personnel committee .
- c Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the council's most senior employee (or other employees) shall contact the chairman of the Personnel committee] in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Personnel committee
- d Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Clerk relates to the chairman or vice-chairman of the Personnel committee this shall be communicated to another member of the Personnel

- e committee which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of [the Personnel committee].
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters as confidential and secure.
- g The council shall keep all written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured and locked and electronic records shall be password protected and encrypted.
- h Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing orders 17(e) and (f) above if so justified

17. Requests for information

- a Requests for information held by the council shall be handled 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 committee. The said committee shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

18. 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.

19. Execution and sealing of legal deeds

See also standing orders 13(b)(xii) above.

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



Subject to standing order 20 (a) above, any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.

20. 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 England District and County Council.
- b Unless the council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to the England District and County Council OR County Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the council.

21. Standing orders generally

- a Standing Orders in bold type contain statutory requirements.
- b All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible after they have delivered his acceptance of office form.
- d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.