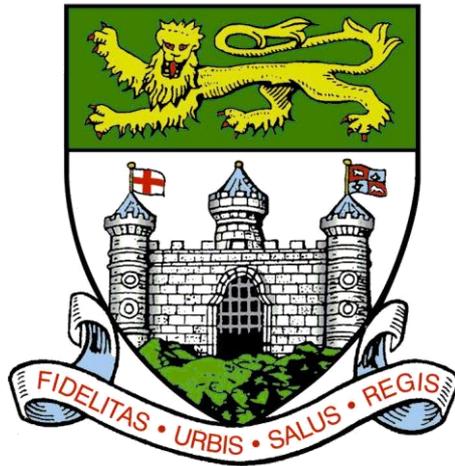


BRIDGNORTH TOWN COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS



Adopted May 2016

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1 Meetings

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Mandatory for Council meetings | ● |
| Mandatory for committee meetings | ● |
| Mandatory for 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 **When calculating the 3 clear days for notice of a meeting to councillors and the public, 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 shall not count.**

- c 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. Photographing or recording of the part of a meeting from which the public are excluded shall not be permitted.

- d A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak.

- e Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Chairman.

- f Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chairman shall direct the order of speaking. The Chairman has discretion as to who can speak during a Committee, Sub-Committee or Advisory Body meeting if they are a non Member.

- g **In accordance with standing order 1(c) above, the press shall be provided reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**

- h **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman.**
- i **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.**
- j **Subject to standing order 1q ii) below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.**
- k **The Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote. (See also standing orders 2 (i) and (j) below.)**
- l **i) Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on any question shall be by a show of hands, or if at least two Members so request by a signed ballot. At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before the voting on any question shall take place.**
- m **The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent, and those for whom apologies have been received.**
- n If the reasons for a councillor's absence are approved by resolution of the Council, the reasons given approval shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which approval was given.
- o **The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors in respect of the entire meeting.**
- p **An interest arising from the code of conduct adopted by the Council, the existence and nature of which is required to be disclosed by a Councillor at a meeting shall be**

recorded in the minutes. (See also standing orders 7 and 8 below.)

q **i) 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 at a Committee meeting**

ii) If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be adjourned. Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be transacted at a following meeting.

r Meetings shall not exceed a period of 2½ hours

s **Questions from Residents**

- i. Each meeting of the Town Council, the Planning Committee, the Property and Grounds Committee or Administration and General Purposes Committee shall include a period of 'Public Question time' not exceeding fifteen minutes.
- ii. Each questioner must be a resident living within the town boundary and shall be allowed to present a question (not a statement) for a maximum of three minutes (at the Chairman's discretion).
- iii. Written questions for answering at a meeting should normally be submitted to the Town Council Office by noon preceding two clear days prior to the meeting, and may relate to an item included on the agenda of the meeting or to any matter within the remit of the relevant Committee or the Town Council, as the case may be.
- iv. residents may ask oral questions at a meeting relating to items included on the agenda of that meeting
- v. Questions shall be directed to the Chair of the meeting who may request the Town Clerk or another member to reply.
- vi. Answers to questions may take the form of:
 - A direct oral response,
 - or
 - When the desired information is contained in a publication, reference to that publication,
 - or
 - When it is more convenient to do so a written answer subsequent to the meeting.
- vii. Every question shall be put and answered without discussion, although the questioner shall be permitted to ask one supplementary question directly related to the answer, if the question is answered at the meeting.
- viii. Questions shall not be permitted that relate to the individual affairs of either the questioner or any other named person, but should only relate to matters of policy or practice, i.e. matters of a general nature rather than individual concern.

- ix. The Chair of the meeting shall disallow any question that is in his or her opinion, scurrilous, improper, pernicious, irrelevant, vexatious or otherwise objectionable.
- x. Questions and the answers are to be minuted at the meeting where the questions are asked or at a subsequent meeting.

t Public evidence

- i. Members of the public may request to give evidence in respect of any matter under consideration on the agenda of the Town Council, Planning Committee, Property and Grounds Committee or Administration and General Purposes Committee, subject to Standing Order 1c.
- ii. Requests to give evidence should be directed to the Chair of the meeting, either before the meeting or during the period of "Public Question Time" included on the agenda by virtue of Standing Order 1s(i) The Chair of the meeting shall report such a request to the meeting and the members present may (subject to Standing Order 1 q (ii)) decide by resolution whether evidence from members of the public is to be permitted in respect of that agenda item.
- iii. If the presentation of evidence by members of the public at a meeting is permitted under [(ii) above], the time allotted for public presentation of evidence in respect of an item under consideration on the agenda shall not exceed 15 minutes in total, and each member of the public is permitted to speak once for no more than 3 minutes.
- iv. A record of evidence submitted by members of the public to a meeting shall be included in the minutes of the meeting.

2 Ordinary Council meetings

See also standing order 1 above

- 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 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 7pm.**
- 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 election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.**

- f The Mayor 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 Deputy Mayor of the Council, if any, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Mayor of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h In an election year, if the current Mayor of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a successor Mayor of the Council has been elected. The current Mayor of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Mayor 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 Mayor of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a new Mayor of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Mayor of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j Following the election of the Mayor of the Council and Deputy Mayor 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 councillors of their declarations of acceptance of office.
 - 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 of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, employees and other local authorities.
 - iv. Review of the terms of references for committees.
 - v. Receipt of nominations to existing committees.
 - vi. 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.
 - 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. In a year of elections, if a Council's period of eligibility to exercise the General Power of Competence expired the day before the annual meeting, to review and make arrangements to reaffirm eligibility.
- 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. Establishing or reviewing the Council's complaints procedure.
- xv. Establishing or reviewing the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- xvi. Establishing or reviewing the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media
- xvii. Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the Council for the year ahead.

3 Proper Officer

- a The Council's Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or such other employee as may be nominated by the Council from time to time or (ii) such other employee appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence. The Proper Officer and the employee appointed to act as such during the Proper Officer's absence shall fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer in standing orders.
- b The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following.
 - i. **Upon the Council having first resolved that service of summons on councillors confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda for a meeting by delivery or post at their residences at least 3 clear days before a meeting is not expedient electronically serve on councillors a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council and a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee at least 3 clear days before the meeting 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 orders 4(a)–(e) below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 3 clear days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it.
- iv. **Convene a meeting of Council for the election of a new Town Mayor of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office, in accordance with standing order [3(b)i] above.**
- 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 sealed using the Council's common seal.
- 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 in a book for such purpose;
- xvi. Refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chairman or in his absence Vice-Chairman 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 Council.
- xvii. Retain custody of the seal of the Council which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
- xviii. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders.

4 Motions requiring written notice

- a In accordance with standing order 3(b)(iii) above, no motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Council's Proper Officer at least 10 clear days before the next meeting. The Proper Officer should respond within 1 working day to enable 4.c to take effect.
- b The Proper Officer may, before including a motion in the agenda received in accordance with standing order 4(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 4(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 unlawful or 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 Having consulted the Chairman or councillors pursuant to standing order 4(d) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
- f Notice of every motion received in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be numbered in the order received and shall be entered in a book, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
- g Every motion rejected in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be duly recorded with a note by the Proper Officer giving reasons for its rejection in a book for that purpose, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.

- h Every motion and resolution shall relate to the Council's statutory functions, powers and lawful obligations or shall relate to an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

5 Motions not requiring written notice

- a Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice.
 - i. To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
 - ii. To approve the absences of councillors.
 - iii. To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - iv. To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - v. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
 - vi. To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
 - vii. To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
 - viii. To close or adjourn debate.
 - ix. To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee.
 - x. To appoint a committee, sub-committee, Working Party or Task and Finish Group or any councillors (including substitutes) thereto.
 - xi. To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
 - xii. To dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
 - xiii. To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee.
 - xiv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub-committee or an employee.
 - xv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
 - xvi. To authorise legal deeds to be sealed by the Council's common seal and witnessed.
(See standing orders 14(a) and (b) below.)
 - xvii. To authorise the payment of monies in line with Financial Regulations.
 - xviii. To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
 - xix. To extend the time limit for speeches.
 - xx. To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
 - xxi. To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
 - xxii. To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders.
 - xxiii. **To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law.**

- xxiv. To adjourn the meeting.
 - xxv. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
 - xxvi. 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.

6 Rules of debate

- a Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chairman's direction for reasons of expedience.
- b Subject to standing order 4 (a) – (e) above, a motion included in an agenda shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded,
- c Subject to standing order 3(b)(iii) above, a motion included in an agenda not moved by the councillor who tabled it, may be treated as withdrawn.
- d A motion to amend an original or substantive motion shall not be considered unless proper notice has been given after the original or substantive motion has been seconded and notice of such amendment, shall, if required by the Chairman, be reduced to writing and handed to the Chairman who shall determine the order in which they are considered.
- e A Councillor may move amendments to his own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder.
- f Any amendment to a motion shall be either:
- i. to leave out words;
 - ii. to add words;
 - iii. to leave out words and add other words.
- g A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration.

- h Only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chairman. No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.
- i Subject to Standing Order 6(h) above, one or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.
- j Pursuant to standing order 6(h) above, the number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a councillor, is limited to one.
- k If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairman.
- l If an amendment is carried, the original motion, as amended, shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- m The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 3 minutes.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply in respect of the substantive motion at the very end of debate and immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Subject to standing orders 6(m) and (n) above, a councillor may not speak further in respect of any one motion except to speak once on an amendment moved by another councillor or to make a point of order or to give a personal explanation.
- 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 decision shall be final without debate.**

- r With the consent of the seconder and/or of the meeting, a motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer. A councillor shall not speak upon the said motion or amendment unless permission for the withdrawal of the motion or amendment has been refused.
- s Subject to standing order 6(o) above, when a councillor's 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 silent or for him 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 any standing order, except those which are mandatory.
- t In respect of standing order 6(s)(iv) above, the Chairman shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote. The Chairman shall call upon the mover of the motion under debate to exercise or waive his right of reply and shall put the motion to the vote after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the meeting shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

7 Code of conduct (England) and Dispensations

See also Standing Orders 1(d) – (i) above

- a Under paragraph 7 of the Localism Act s 27-34 the Council must adopt a code to deal with the conduct of its Members to promote and maintain high standards of conduct.
- b The requirements of the Localism Act 2011 (SS29-34) Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/1464) must be adopted by all Members for the provisions in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests which are enforced by criminal sanction.

- c All Councillors shall observe the Code adopted by the council and also the requirements of the Localism Act.**
- d All Councillors shall undertake training in the Code of Conduct within 6 months of the adoption of the code.
- e Councillors with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest on any item to be considered at the meeting:
- must disclose an interest not registered to the meeting and forward that disclosure to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting at which the disclosure is disclosed
 - may not participate in any discussion of the matter at a meeting
 - may not participate in any vote taken
 - must under the Code of Conduct leave the room during discussion and voting on the matter
- f Unless a Councillor has been granted a dispensation, a Councillor or non-Councillor shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have another interest if so required by the Code of Conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- g. 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.
- h. A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer or by a meeting of the council, a committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
- i. A dispensation request shall confirm:
- i) the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii) whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting or 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

- j. Subject to Standing Orders 7 (g) and (h) 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, committee or a sub-committee for which the dispensation is required
- k. **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with Standing Order 7 (h) 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 transacting of that business or**
 - ii) **granting the dispensation is in the interests of the persons living in the council's area or**
 - iii) **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation**

8 Questions from Councillors

- a A councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council at a meeting of the Council, provided that 2 clear days notice of the question has been given to the Proper Officer where the question relates to items which are not otherwise included in the agenda for the meeting.
- b Questions related to items of business on the agenda for a meeting shall only be asked during that agenda item. Other questions submitted in accordance with Standing Order 8a above shall only be asked during the part of the meeting set aside for such questions and shall be put and answered without discussion.
- c If in the opinion of the Chairman any question is scurrilous, improper, pernicious, irrelevant, vexatious or otherwise objectionable, the Chairman may move that the question shall be disallowed and the motion, if seconded, shall be voted upon without discussion

9 Minutes

- a The draft minutes of a Council, a Committee or a sub-committee meeting will normally be received by the Chairman of the meeting within three working days of the meeting. The Chairman will normally need to return those minutes to the Committee Clerk within three working days of receiving the draft, before the draft minutes are sent out to Councillors.
- b If a copy of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting, be it Council, a Committee, Sub-Committee or notes of a Working Party, has been circulated to councillors no later than the day of service of the summons to attend the scheduled meeting they shall be taken as read.
- c No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the minutes shall be raised in accordance with standing order 5(a)(iv) above.
- d If the Council resolves to receive and adopt the minutes of a Committee, sub-Committee, Working Party or Task and Finish Group, recommendations contained within the minutes shall be deemed to be resolutions of the Council.
- e Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, 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.
- f 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 majority of the () and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- g Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, any previous draft minutes of the meeting shall be destroyed.

10 Disorderly conduct

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly.
- b If, in the opinion of the Chairman, there has been a breach of standing order 10(a) above, the Chairman shall express that opinion and request such person(s) to moderate or improve their behaviour. Thereafter any councillor (including the Chairman) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.
- c If a resolution made in accordance with standing order 10(b) above, is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further reasonable steps as may reasonably be necessary to restore order or progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or; closing the meeting.

11 Rescission of 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 8 councillors of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- b When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to standing order 11(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.
- c Members may consider rescinding a previous resolution if there is new or additional information that is of such significant relevance that it would have made a material difference to consideration of the original resolution of Council.

12 Voting on appointments

- a 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 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. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

13 Expenditure

- a Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- b **The Council's financial regulations shall be reviewed once a year.**
- c **The Council's financial regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee, sub-committee or to an employee.**

14 Execution and sealing of legal deeds

See also standing order 5(a)(xvi) above

- 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 14(a) above, the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two members of the Council who shall sign the deed as witnesses.**

(The above is applicable to a Council with a common seal.)

15 Committees

See also standing order 1 above

- a The Council may, at its annual meeting, appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. may permit committees to determine the dates of their meetings;
 - iii. shall appoint and determine the term of office of councillor or non-councillor members of such a committee (unless the appointment of non-councillors is

- prohibited by law) so as to hold office no later than the next annual meeting;
- iv. Non-members of the committee must notify the Clerk or the Chairman of the meeting that they wish to speak at the beginning of a committee meeting.
 - v. may, in accordance with standing orders, dissolve a committee at any time.

16 Sub-committees

See also standing order 1 above

- a Unless there is a Council resolution to the contrary, every committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by resolution of the committee.

17 Advisory committees

See also standing order 1 above

- a The Council may appoint advisory committees comprised of a number of councillors and non-councillors.
- b Any Advisory Committee and any of their sub-committees may consist wholly of persons who are non-councillors.

18 Working Parties

- a Working Parties should be set up where the Town Council can include members of the community in the work of that meeting.
- b Working Parties should be given a specific remit and report back to a parent committee.

19 Task and Finish Groups

- a Task and Finish groups will be set up for specific one off projects
- b Task and Finish groups should normally meet no more than three times on any one topic and report back to the appropriate Committee or Council. They should be disbanded once the appropriate Committee or the Council has determined that their work has been concluded.

20 Extraordinary meetings and Council, Committee and Sub-Committees

See also standing order 1 above

- 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 to do so by two councillors, those two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue 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 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 councillors or members of the committee (or sub-committee), any members of the committee (or sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee (or a sub-committee).

21 Accounts and Financial Statements

- a “Proper practices” in Standing Orders relate to the most recent version of the 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 Council’s financial regulations, which shall be reviewed at least annually.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year:
 - a statement summarising the Council’s receipts and payments for the each quarter and the balances held at the end of a quarter. This statement should include a comparison with the budget and current debtors and creditors for the financial year

- the Councils aggregate receipts and payments for the year to date
 - the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported
- d Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March shall be presented to each councillor before the end of the following month of May. The Statement of Accounts of the Council (which is subject to external audit), including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to Council for formal approval before 30 June.

22 Estimates/Precepts

- a **The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of January.**
- b Throughout the November cycle of meetings the Property and Grounds Committee and Administration and General Purposes Committee will consider the budgets in relation to the remit of that Committee
- c The Administration and General Purposes will meet to consider the budget proposals and make recommendations on the other areas of the budget to the Council

23 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.

24 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 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 draft minutes of Council, a Committee and sub-committee meeting will be received by the Chairman no later than three working days of that meeting. The Chairman will need to return those minutes to the Committee Clerk within three days before the draft minutes are sent out to Councillors.

25 Unauthorised activities

- a Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee:
 - 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 Handling confidential business 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 and Councillors and staff should not disclose this information.
- b A councillor in breach of the provisions of standing order 26(a) above may be removed from any committee or sub-committee by a resolution of the Council.

27 The General Power of Competence (GPC)

- a Before exercising the power of competence the council shall have passed a resolution to confirm it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria required to qualify as an eligible parish council.

- b The Council's period of eligibility begins on the date that the resolution under Standing Order 27(a) above was made and expires on the day before the annual meeting of the Council that takes place in a year of ordinary elections.
- c If the council loses its eligibility at the next relevant annual meeting then if a parish council has already started an activity under the GPC for which there is no other specific power, it remains eligible for the purpose of completing that activity, but it cannot start anything new under the power until it is in a position to make the formal decision that it meets the criteria.

28 Matters affecting council employees

- a If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the Council or the Administration and General Purposes Committee has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to standing order 1(c) above.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior employee shall notify the Chairman of the Administration and General Purposes Committee, in his absence, the Vice-Chairman of the Administration and General Purposes Committee of any absence occasioned by illness or urgency and that person shall report such absence to the Administration and General Purposes Committee at its next meeting.
- c The Chairman of Council and the Chairman of the Administration and General Purposes Committee shall jointly conduct a review of the performance and/or appraisal of the Town Clerk, in accordance with the Council's personnel policies or otherwise as specifically contractually provided, and shall keep a written record of it. The review and/or appraisal shall be reported back to the Administration and General Purposes Committee.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior employee shall contact the Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the Administration and General Purposes Committee or in the absence of either of them, the Deputy Chairman of the Council or Vice-Chairman of the Administration and General Purposes Committee (as the case may be) in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.
- e If a formal or informal grievance matter raised by the Town Clerk relates to a member of the Council, that member shall not take in any part in the handling of the matter.

- c Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of Council employees shall keep written records of all meetings relating to their performance, and capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.
- d The Council shall keep written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected.
- e 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.
- f Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to employee records referred to in standing orders 28(g) and (h) above if so justified.
- g Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 28(g) and (h) above shall be provided only to (post holder) and/or the Chairman of the Council or Administration and General Purposes Committee

29 Freedom of Information Act 2000

- 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.
- b Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the chairman of the Administration and General Purposes Committee. The said committee 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 set out under standing order 3(b)(x) above.

30 Relations with the press/media

- a All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be dealt with by via the Town Clerk's office. Whenever possible, all press releases should be given in writing.
- b Unless authorised by the Council or with the agreement of the Town Clerk, Councillors can not speak on behalf of the Town Council.
- c Councillors who have contact with the press or media that does not meet the requirements of 30 b, should make it clear that it is their own personal point of view and ask that it be clearly reported as their personal view.

- d Social media
 - i) The Town Council will only use social media sites for the promotion of the Town Council and events.
 - ii) Town Councillors will abide by the Code of Conduct and Standing Order number 30b and 30c when discussing Council related matters on public social media forums

31 Recording of Meetings

- a. The Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (as amended) requires that a person present at a meeting under the provisions of the Act may not orally comment about the meeting as it takes place but may otherwise:
 - I. film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting
 - II. use any other means for enabling a persons not present to see or hear the proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later,
 - III. report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting
- b. Subject to Standing Order 1 (c) above, photography, recording, broadcasting or transmitting of the proceedings will be permitted providing this does not impede the proper conduct of the meeting. No flash photography will be allowed.
- c. Verbal commentary or reports from the meeting room, during the meeting, will not be permitted.
- d. Care should be taken not to photograph members of the public attending the meeting without their express consent.
- e. The Chairman's decision as to whether activities undertaken to report on the meeting are disruptive shall be final.
- f. Anyone wishing to report from a meeting is requested to consult with the Proper Officer (Town Clerk) prior to attending.

32 Liaison with Unitary Councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillor of the Unitary Council representing its electoral wards.
- b Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter sent to the Unitary Council shall be sent to the Unitary Council councillor representing its electoral wards.

33 Financial matters

- 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 Internal Auditor 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;
 - v. procurement policies (subject to standing order 32(b) below) including the setting of values for different procedures where the contract has an estimated value of less than £5,000.
- b **Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £5,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in standing order 33(c) below.**
- c Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:
- i. Tenders should be advertised through the Town Council website and advised directly to any appropriate prospective tenderers included in an approved tender list maintained by the Council. Consideration should be given to using newspapers, social media, the approved tender lists of other authorities and specialist media where relevant.
A tender list will be kept, any tenders should be advised to a previous supplier and local suppliers and where appropriate tenderers on that list should also be advised that a tender is to be invited.
 - ii. a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - iii. tenders are to be sent, in a sealed marked envelope, to the Proper Officer by a stated date and time;
 - iv. tenders submitted are to be opened, after the stated closing date and time, by the Proper Officer and two Members of the Council;
 - v. tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of Council or Committee.

- d Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.
- e The 2015 Regulations are engaged when (a) local councils in England are procuring a public works, public service or public supply contract with an estimated value of £25,000 or more and (b) local councils in England and Wales are procuring (i) a public works contract with an estimated value of currently £4,104,394 or more or (ii) a public service or public supply contract with an estimated value of currently £164,176 or more. The financial thresholds for proposed contracts in (b) are set by the European Commission and are confirmed in the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU.

34 Allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct

- a On receipt of a notification by the Unitary Authority that it is dealing with a complaint that a Councillor or non-Councillor with voting rights has breached the code of conduct the Proper Officer shall , subject to Standing Order ~~26-28~~ above, refer it to a committee known as the Administration and General Purposes Committee.
- b Where the notification relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of the Administration and General Purposes Committee of that fact, who, upon receipt of such notification, shall nominate a person to assume the duties of the Proper Officer set out in the remainder of this standing order, who shall continue to act in respect of that matter as such until the complaint is resolved.
- c Where a notification relates to a complaint made by an employee (not being the Proper Officer) the Proper Officer shall ensure that no employees involved deal with any aspect of the complaint.
- d 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 of the Administration and General Purposes Committee) shall take the steps set out below, together with other steps considered necessary, to maintain confidentiality.
 - i. Draft the summonses and agendas in such a way that the identity and subject matter of the complaint are not disclosed.
 - ii. Ensure that any background papers containing the information set out in standing

- order 33(a) above are not made public.
- iii. Ensure that the public and press are excluded from meetings as appropriate.
 - iv. Ensure that the minutes of meetings preserve confidentiality.
 - v. Consider any liaison that may be required with the person or body with statutory responsibility for the investigation of the matter.
- e Standing order 33(d) above should not be taken to prohibit the Council (whether through the Proper Officer or the Chairman of the Administration and General Purposes Committee or otherwise) 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.
- f The Administration and General Purposes Committee shall have the power to:
- i. seek documentary and other evidence from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
 - ii. seek and share information relevant to the complaint;
 - iii. grant the member involved a financial indemnity in respect of legal costs, which shall be in accordance with the law and subject to approval by a meeting of the full Council.

35 Variation, revocation and suspension of standing orders

- a Any or every part of the standing orders, except those which are mandatory by law, may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.
- b A motion to permanently add to or to vary or to 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.

36 Standing orders to be given to councillors

- a The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor upon delivery of his declaration of acceptance of office.
- b The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.

- c A councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than 3 times in one meeting may result in him being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.

Explanatory notes

1. Provisions re public participation

- a. Standing order 1 d previously read "Subject to standing order 1(c) above, members of the public are permitted to ask questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda or in relation to the remit of a Standing Committee or Council." Provision for questions was also included in standing order 1z and was largely duplicated, so 1d has been removed and the provision for questions is now contained in 1s. Provision for public evidence is now included as 1t.
- b. 1e previously read "The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing order 1(d) above shall not exceed Fifteen minutes", and 1z i) read "Each meeting of the Town Council, the Planning Committee, the Property and Grounds Committee or Administration and General Purposes Committee shall include a period of 'Public Question time' not exceeding fifteen minutes." This duplication has been resolved by retaining the previous 1z i) as 1s i).
- c. 1f previously read "Subject to standing order 1(e) above, each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than (3) minutes. However one supplementary question may be asked directly related to the answer". Speaking for 3 minutes was also required under 1z ii) and the ability to ask a supplementary question was included at 1z v). The duplication has been removed and relevant provisions of previous Standing Order 1z have been retained as 1s ii) and 1s vii).
- d. 1g previously read "In accordance with standing order 1(d) above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session may not receive a response at the meeting but will receive a response ~~and~~ in writing after a meeting" and 1z iv) i) also provided for an oral response, reference to a publication, or a written answer. The duplication has been removed and the provisions of 1z iv) i) retained as 1s vi).
- e. 1h previously read "In accordance with standing order 1(g) above, the Chairman may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk for a written or oral response" and was duplicated at

1z iv) which read “Questions shall be directed to the Chair of the meeting who may request the Town Clerk or another member to reply”. The duplication has been removed and 1z iv) retained as 1s v).

- f. 1i previously read “A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting” and for questions was duplicated at 1z vii) “Questions and the answers are to be minuted at the meeting where the questions are asked or at a subsequent meeting”. The contents of 1z vii) have been retained as 1s x).