



HASLEMERE TOWN COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

Adopted by Full Council on

20th November 2014

This page is intentionally left blank

Table of Contents

	Page No
Meetings:	5
Ordinary Council Meetings:	6
Order of Business:	7
Proper Officer:	8
Motions requiring written Notice:	9
Motions not requiring written notice:	9
Rules of Debate:	10
Code of Conduct:	12
Disorderly Conduct:	12
Members Interests:	13
Questions:	14
Minutes:	14
Rescission of previous resolutions:	14
Voting on Appointments:	14
Expenditure:	14
Committees and Sub-Committees:	15
Voting in Committees and Sub-Committees:	16
Presence of Non-Members at Committee Meetings and Circulation of Agenda:	16
Planning and Highways Committee:	16
Extraordinary meetings:	17
Financial Regulations:	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Canvassing of and recommendations by Councillors:	17
Inspection of documents, Confidential business & Unauthorised activities:	17
Matters affecting Council staff:	17
Freedom of Information Act:	19
Relations with the Press/Media:	19
Variations, revocation and suspension of Standing Orders:	19
Standing orders to be given to Councillors:	19

This page is intentionally left blank

All Standing Orders [SO] or parts thereof shown in bold type denote those which may not be suspended by resolution at a meeting [see SO 117]

Meetings:

- 1) **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.**
- 2) **When calculating the three 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.**
- 3) **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 any 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.**
- 4) After Apologies for Absence have been given, the person presiding may for a period of up to fifteen minutes in total, permit members of the public present at the meeting, and on the electoral roll of Haslemere town Council; or a young person under 18 whose parent or guardian is on the electoral roll; or with business premises in the town [evidenced by a business rates bill]; or user of the Town Council's premises; to do one of the following:
 - i. Make a statement; or
 - ii. Ask a question relating only to the business of the Council or relevant Committee [as applicable]; or
 - iii. Present a petition [of at least ten signatures];

Provided that:

- a) The person presiding at the meeting may, at their discretion, defer the presentation of the statement, question or petition until the appropriate point in the agenda is reached;
- b) No more than **one** member of the public shall for permitted for speak **for or against** any one subject;
- c) The member of the public shall identify him/herself before speaking at the meeting;
- d) All matters shall be addressed to the Chairman and the time allowed for making a statement or asking a question shall not exceed **four** minutes;
- e) The person presiding may allow Councillors to ask questions of the member of the public to clarify what is being said.

- f) All responses to statements, questions or petitions shall be given by the person presiding at the meeting without debate, save that the person presiding may direct that a response be referred to an employee for a written or oral response.
- 5) **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.**
 - 6) **Subject to Standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by the Chairman may in the Chairman's absence be done by the Vice Chairman [if any].**
 - 7) **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 Vice-Chairman are absent, a Councillor chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
 - 8) **Subject to Standing Order 16 below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.**
 - 9) **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 a casting vote whether or not the Chairman gave an original vote. [See also Standing Orders 26 and 27 below].**
 - 10) **Unless Standing Orders provide otherwise, voting on any 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 their vote for or against that question.**
 - 11) **The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of Councillors present and absent.**
 - 12) **A Councillor shall submit apologies for absence to the Town Clerk prior to a meeting.**
 - 13) **During a Councillor's prolonged period of absence, a meeting may be asked to approve, by a resolution the Councillor's reason for absence and such resolution shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which approval was given.**
 - 14) **The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to Councillors in respect of the entire meeting.**
 - 15) **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless it is quorate. A meeting shall not be quorate unless the greater of three or one third of the whole number of members of the Council or Committee are present.**
 - 16) **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.**

Ordinary Council Meetings:

- 18) **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which any new Councillors take their Declaration of Acceptance of Office.**

- 19) In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held on such a day in May as the Council may direct.
- 20) If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 7.00 pm.
- 21) 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 may direct.
- 22) The Chairman of the Meeting of the Council shall be the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor. In the absence of both members, Council will elect a Chairman of the meeting who may exercise all the powers and duties of the Town Mayor in relation to the conduct of the meeting.

Order of Business:

- 23) At each Annual Meeting the first business shall be;
 - a) To elect the Town Mayor
 - b) To receive the Town Mayor's declaration of acceptance of office, or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.
 - c) To elect the Deputy Town Mayor.
 - d) In an election year to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.
 - e) To receive such declarations of acceptance of office and written undertakings to observe the Council's Code of Conduct as are required by law to be made or, if not then received, to decide when they shall be received.
- 24) The Town Mayor, unless the individual has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until a new town Mayor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- 25) The Deputy Town Mayor unless the individual has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Town Mayor at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- 26) In an election year, if the current town Mayor has been re-elected as a member of the Council, that Town Mayor shall preside at the meeting until a new Town Mayor has been elected. The current Town Mayor may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new town Mayor and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- 27) In an election year, if the current Town Mayor has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, that town Mayor shall nonetheless preside at the annual meeting until a successor Town Mayor has been elected. The current Town Mayor shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new town Mayor but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- 28) Following the election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the order of business unless the Council otherwise decides on the grounds of urgency, shall be as follows;

- a) Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council provided that a copy has been circulated to each member not later than the day of issue of the summons to attend the meeting, the Minutes may be taken as read: and to receive and note minutes of and/or determine recommendations made by Committees.
- b) After consideration, to approve the signature of the Minutes by the Chairman as a correct record.**
- c) Receipt of nominations to existing Committees.
- d) 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.
- e) Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back.

Proper Officer:

29) The Council's Proper Officer shall be either (i) the Town 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. The Proper Officer shall also be the Council's responsible Finance Officer.

30) The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following:

- a) **Sign and serve on Councillors by email, or by delivery at or post to their residences a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council, Committee or Sub-Committee at least three clear days before the meeting.**
- b) **Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council, or a Committee or Sub-Committee [provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by Councillors is signed by them].**
- c) **Convene a meeting of Full Council for the election of a Town Mayor, occasioned by a casual vacancy in that office, in accordance with Standing Order 30 [a] above.**
- d) **Receive and retain copies of bye-laws made by other local authorities.**
- e) **Received and retain declarations of acceptance of office from Councillors.**
- f) Retain a copy of every Councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and to keep copies of the same available for inspection.
- g) 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.

h) To sign notices and other documents on behalf of the Council.

31) The Responsible Finance Officer shall 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.

Motions requiring written Notice:

32) 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 **seven** clear days before the next meeting.

33) The Proper Officer may, before including a motion in the agenda received in accordance with Standing Order 32 above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.

34) If the proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with Standing Order 32 above as not to be 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 four clear days before the meeting.

35) 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.

36) Notice of every motion received in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders shall be number in the order received and shall be formally recorded, such records shall be open to inspection by all Councillors.

37) 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 shall be formally documented, which shall be open to inspection by all Councillors.

38) 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.

Motions not requiring written notice:

39) Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice:

- a) To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
- b) To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- c) To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
- d) To dispose of business, if any remaining from the last meeting.
- e) To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
- f) To proceed to the next business on the agenda.

- g) To close or adjourn debate.
 - h) To refer by formal delegation, a matter to a Committee or Sub-Committee or an employee.
 - i) To receive nominations to a Committee or Sub-Committee.
 - j) To note the minutes of a meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee.
 - k) To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a Committee or Sub-Committee or an employee.
 - l) To authorise legal deeds to be witnessed.
 - m) To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration provided that such amendment shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
 - n) To extend the time limit for speeches.
 - o) To exclude the Press and public for all or part of a meeting.
 - p) To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
 - q) To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by Standing Orders.
 - r) **To suspend any Standing Order except those which are mandatory by law.**
 - s) To adjourn the meeting.
 - t) To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
- 40) If a motion falls within the terms of reference of a Committee or Sub-Committee or within the delegated powers conferred on any 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.

Rules of Debate:

- 41) Subject to Standing orders 32 to 38 above, a motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- 42) Any amendment to a motion shall be either;
- a) To leave out words;
 - b) To add words;
 - c) To leave out words and add other words.
- 43) A Councillor may move amendments to their own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, such amendment to it shall require the consent of the seconder.
- 44) A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration.
- 45) 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.

- 46) Subject to Standing Order 45 above, one or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.
- 47) Pursuant to Standing Order 45 above, the number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a Councillor, is limited to one.
- 48) If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairman.
- 49) 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.
- 50) The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceed **four** minutes.
- 51) 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.
- 52) Subject to Standing Orders 49 and 50 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 with the consent of the Chairman to give a personal explanation.
- 53) 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 that Councillor considers has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting which concerns the Councillor.
- 54) A point of order shall be decided by the chairman and the Chairman's decision shall be final.
- 55) With the consent of the seconder and/or 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.
- 56) Subject to Standing Order 52 above, when a Councillor's motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except:
 - a) To amend the motion;
 - b) To proceed to the next business;
 - c) To adjourn the debate;
 - d) To put the motion to a vote;
 - e) To ask a person to be silent or for that person to leave the meeting;
 - f) To refer a motion to a Committee of Sub-Committee for consideration;
 - g) To exclude the public and press;
 - h) To adjourn the meeting;
 - i) To suspend any Standing Order, except those which are mandatory.

- 57) In respect of Standing Order 56d 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 their 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.
- 58) When there is no ballot, a member may require the Clerk to record the names of the members who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it. Such a request must be made before moving on to the next business.

Code of Conduct and Dispensations:

- 59) 1. All Councillors shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.
- 60) 2. All Councillors shall undertake training in the Code of Conduct within six months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.
- 61) 3. Any Code of Conduct complaint must be made in writing to the Town Clerk who will, as appropriate, forward the complaint to the Monitoring Officer of Waverley Borough Council.
- 62) 4. Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- 63) 5. Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the council's code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- 64) 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.
- 65) A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer in relation to:
- a. the approval of the budget,
 - b. the approval of any borrowing under the Local Government Act 2003,
 - c. the making of the precept,
 - d. the making of the calculations under ss 49A, 49B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992,
 - e. the approval of an allowance, payment or indemnity to Members.
- 66) And in all other cases by a meeting of the council and that decision is final.
- 67) 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.

68) Dispensations requests shall be considered by the Proper Officer or Council (as applicable) before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.

69) A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing orders 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.

Disorderly Conduct:

70) No person shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman of the meeting, wilfully obstruct the transaction of business or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly or in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.

71) If, in the opinion of the Chairman, there has been a breach of Standing Order 62 above, the Chairman shall express that opinion and 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.

72) If a resolution made in accordance with Standing Order 63 above, is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or may adjourn the meeting.

Members Interests:

73) **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.**

74) **The Clerk is required to compile and hold a register of member's interests in accordance with agreement reached with the Monitoring Office of Waverley Borough Council.**

75) **If a member who has declared a Non Pecuniary interest then considers the interest to be Pecuniary, they must withdraw from the room or chamber during consideration of the item to which the interest relates.**

Questions:

76) A Councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council provided **three** clear days notice of the question has been given to the Proper Officer.

77) Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

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

Minutes:

79) If a copy of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting 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.

80) No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy.

81) 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.

Rescission of previous resolutions:

82) A resolution [whether affirmative or negative] of the Council shall not be reversed within six months except by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least six members of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a Committee.

83) When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to Standing Order 74 above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

Voting on Appointments:

84) Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received a 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.

Expenditure:

85) Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

- 86) **The Financial Regulations shall be reviewed at least once every council term.**
- 87) **The 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 an employee.**

Committees and Sub-Committees:

- 88) The Council may appoint standing Committees at the Annual Meeting and may at any other time appoint such other Committees as are necessary, but, subject to any statutory provision in that behalf:
- a) It shall not appoint any member of a Committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting.
 - b) It may appoint persons other than members to any Committee.
 - c) It may at any time, dissolve or alter the membership of a Committee.
- 89) The Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor shall be ex-officio voting members of every Committee with the exception of the Staff Committee where the Deputy Town Mayor is not ex-officio.
- 90) Every Committee shall, at its first meeting and before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman, who shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting and, shall settle its programme of meetings for the year.
- 91) The Chairman of a Committee or the Town Mayor may summon an additional meeting of that Committee at any time. An additional meeting shall also be summoned on the requisition in writing of not less than a quarter of the members of the Committee. The summons shall set out the business to be considered at the special meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.
- 92) The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee shall be members of every Sub-Committee appointed by it unless they signify that they do not wish to serve.
- 93) Every Committee may appoint Sub-Committees for purposes to be specified by the Committee.
- 94) Except where ordered by the Council in the case of a Committee, or by the Council or by the appropriate Committee in the case of a Sub-Committee, the quorum of a Committee or Sub-Committee shall be one-third of its members.
- 95) The Standing Orders on rules of debate [except those parts relating to standing and to speaking more than once] and the Standing Order on interests of members in contracts and other matters shall apply to all Committee and Sub-Committee meetings.

Voting in Committees and Sub-Committees:

- 96) Members of Committees and Sub-Committees entitled to vote, shall vote by a show of hands, or, if at least two members so request, by ballot.
- 97) Chairmen of Committees and Sub-Committees shall have a second or casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

Presence of Non-Members at Committee Meetings and Circulation of

Agenda:

- 98)
- a) Any members of the Council shall, unless the Council otherwise directs, be entitled to be present as a spectator at the meetings of any Committees or Sub-Committees of which they are not a member and may, by permission of the Chairman of the meeting, speak on the subject under discussion but shall not vote.
 - b) A member who has proposed a resolution which has been referred to any Committee or Sub-Committee of which he is not a member may explain his resolution to the Committee or Sub-Committee but shall not vote.
 - c) All members of the Council and the local Press representative shall receive a copy of all Committee and Sub-Committee agendas.

Planning and Highways Committee:

- 99)
- a) The Clerk shall record for the next Planning and Highways Committee, as soon as it is received, the following particulars of every planning application notified to the Council:
 - i) The date on which it was received,
 - ii) The name of the applicant, and
 - iii) The place to which it relates.
 - b) The Clerk shall refer every planning application received to the Chairman of the Planning and highways Committee and the Town Mayor or, in the Chairman's absence, to the Vice-Chairman within a reasonable time.
 - c) The Planning and Highways Committee shall have full delegated powers to comment on and pass to Waverley Borough Council and, as appropriate, Surrey County Council, the Council's views on all planning applications received by the Council and other planning matters referred to it.
 - d) The Planning and Highways Committee shall have powers to consider and make recommendations to the Council on all other Planning and Highway matters referred to it. In the case of any such matter requiring a decision before the next meeting of the Council, the Planning and Highways Committee is empowered to act with fully delegated powers of the Council.
 - e) All Members of Council are Members of the Planning and Highways Committee.

Extraordinary meetings:

- 100) **The Town Mayor may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- 101) **If the Town Mayor fails or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been so requested 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.**
- 102) The Chairman of a Committee [or Sub-Committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Committee or Sub-Committee at any time.
- 103) If the Chairman of a Committee [or Sub-Committee] does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested to do so by two Councillors, those two Councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Committee [or Sub-Committee]. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two Councillors.

Canvassing of and recommendations by Councillors:

- 97) 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. This Standing Order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

Inspection of documents, Confidential business & Unauthorised activities:

- 98) Subject to Standing Orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a Councillor may, for the purpose of official duties, but not otherwise, inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a Committee or a Sub-Committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its Committees or Sub-Committees shall be available for inspection by Councillors.
- 99) Councillors shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware is of a confidential nature.
- 100) A Councillor in breach of the provisions of Standing Order 99 above may be removed from a Committee or a Sub-Committee by a resolution of the Council.
- 101) Subject to Standing Orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a Councillor may, for the purpose of official duties [but not otherwise], inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a Committee or a Sub-Committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its Committees or Sub-Committees shall be available for inspection by Councillors.

Matters affecting Council staff:

- 102) If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the body meeting has decided whether or not the Press and public shall be excluded pursuant to Standing Order 3 above.
- 103) Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior employee present shall notify the Chairman of the Staff Committee and the Town Mayor if any absence is likely to occasion the closing of the Town Council's offices. The Town Clerk shall make a summary report of staff absences for a given period when so requested by a member of the Staff Committee.
- 104) The Chairman of the Staff Committee or, in the absence of the Chairman, the Town Mayor shall conduct an annual appraisal of the Town Clerk in accordance with the Council's Appraisal Scheme. Other staff appraisals shall be conducted by the Town Clerk and the Chairman of the Staff Committee, in accordance with the Appraisal Scheme.
- 105) In every year, not later than the January meeting at which the financial estimates for the next year are settled, the Council shall review the pay and conditions of service of existing employees.
- 106) Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance and disciplinary matters, the Council's most senior employee shall inform the Chairman of the Staff Committee or, in the absence of the Chairman, the Town Mayor in respect of any informal or formal grievance matter, and the matter shall be reported to and dealt with by resolution of the Staff Committee.
- 107) 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 Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Staff Committee, or the Town Mayor, then the Council's most senior employee shall inform the Chairman of the Finance and Audit Committee who will determine whether the matter should be reported to and dealt with by resolution of the Staff Committee or the Finance and Audit Committee.
- 108) Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of Council employees shall keep written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.
- 109) The Council shall keep written records relating to employees secure at all times. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected.
- 110) 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 direct responsibility for such matters.
- 111) Only the Town Clerk or the Chairman of the Staff Committee or, in the absence of the Chairman, the Town Mayor, shall otherwise have access to employee records referred to in Standing Orders 108 and 109 above.

- 112) Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in Standing Orders 108 and 109 above, shall be provided only to the Town Clerk, the Chairman of the Staff Committee or the Town Mayor.

Freedom of Information Act:

- 113) All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy [revised November 2008] in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 114) Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman of the Finance and Audit 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 30(g) above.

Relations with the Press/Media:

- 115) All requests from the Press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be dealt with by the Town Clerk.
- 116) Councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media without a resolution of the Council.

Variations, revocation and suspension of Standing Orders:

- 117) 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.
- 118) A motion to add or to vary or revoke one or more of the Council's Standing Orders, not mandatory by law, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the name of at least two Councillors.

Standing orders to be given to Councillors:

- 119) The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's Standing Orders to a Councillor upon delivery of that Councillor's declaration of acceptance of office and again following any review of these Standing Orders.
- 120) The decision of the chairman of a meeting in relation to the application of Standing Orders at that meeting shall be final.
- 121) A Councillor's failure to observe Standing Orders more than three times in one meeting entitles the chairman of the meeting to exclude the Councillor from the meeting.

Note:

These Standing Orders were reviewed in 2013 by the Proper Officer and the Finance & Audit Committee.