

Great Witchingham Parish Council Standing Orders

Standing orders are the written rules of a local council. They are used to confirm a council's internal organisational, administrative and procurement procedures and procedural matters for meetings. They are not the same as the policies of a council but they may refer to them. A local council must have standing orders for the procurement of contracts.

Councillors, the Responsible Financial Officer, the Proper Officer and meetings of the full council, are subject to many statutory requirements. A council should have standing orders to confirm those statutory requirements.

The LGA 1972 s. 101(1)(a) permits a council to appoint committees and sub-committees. Therefore a council should also have standing orders to control the number, place, quorum, notices and other procedures for meetings of committees and sub-committees because these are subject to fewer statutory requirements. If it does not, committees and sub-committees may adopt their own standing orders. The LGA 1972 further permits, unless the council determines otherwise, that a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee. Working Groups can be established to deal with topics of a specific nature and can consist of Councillor(s), Officers and other individuals and unless otherwise stated in the terms of reference, report to and makes recommendations to the constituting body.

The meetings of committees and sub committees of Great Witchingham Parish Council follow the standing orders adopted for meetings of the full council unless otherwise stated.

Standing orders that are in **bold type** contain statutory requirements and are therefore mandatory. Other standing orders not in bold type do not contain statutory requirements and are designed and adopted to suit the council's needs and allow Great Witchingham Parish Council to operate effectively.

For convenience, the word "councillor" is used in these standing orders and includes a non-councillor with or without voting rights unless otherwise stated.

A 'non-councillor' is a member of a committee (including a joint committee) or sub-committee (including a joint sub-committee) of a local council who is not a councillor. The LGA 1972 s. 102(3) empowers a parish council to appoint non-councillors to council committees and sub-committees. Only in extremely limited situations do non-councillor members of a committee or a sub-committee enjoy voting rights and generally non-councillor members of a committee or a sub-committee do not have voting rights.

These standing orders do not include Financial Regulations. Financial Regulations are standing orders to regulate and control the financial affairs and accounting procedures of a local council. The Financial Regulations, as opposed to the standing orders of a council, include most of the requirements relevant to the Responsible Financial Officer.

Index of standing orders

1. Rules of debate at meetings
2. Disorderly conduct at meetings
3. Meetings generally
4. Committees & Sub Committees
5. Ordinary council meetings
6. Extraordinary meetings of the council, committees & sub committees
7. Previous resolutions
8. Voting on appointments
9. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer
10. Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice
11. Management of Information
12. Draft minutes
13. Code of conduct and dispensations
14. Code of conduct complaints
15. Proper Officer
16. Responsible Financial Officer
17. Accounts and accounting statements
18. Financial controls and procurement
19. Handling Staff matters
20. Responsibilities to provide information
21. Responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation
22. Relations with the press/media
23. Execution and sealing of legal deeds
24. Communicating with District and County Councillors
25. Restrictions on councillor activities
26. Standing orders generally

1. Rules of debate at meetings

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. to exercise a right of reply.

- p During the debate on a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
 - i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 2 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

2. Disorderly conduct at meetings

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. Meetings generally

- a
 - i. **Meetings of the full council**, a committee or sub committee **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.**
 - ii. Smoking is not permitted at any meeting of the Council, or any meeting under the auspices of the Council.

- iii. Mobile phones must be switched to quiet mode during any meeting of the Council unless authorised by the chairman of the meeting.
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a full council meeting** or a committee or sub committee meeting **does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **Meetings of the full council, its committees and sub committees 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**
- d Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of any matter irrespective of whether the matter is included on the agenda or not.
- e The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(d) above shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- f Subject to standing order 3(e) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than 5 minutes.
- g A councillor
 - i. who has proposed a resolution, which has been referred to any committee of which they are not a member may explain his resolution to the committee but shall not vote
 - ii. not proposing a resolution may attend any committee meeting of which they are not a member, and may speak at the point of public participation
 - iii. who attends any committee meeting of which they are not a member shall sit in the public area.
- h In accordance with standing order 3(d) above, a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak, but shall not speak until invited to do so by the chairman of the meeting.
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- l **Subject to standing order 3(m), a person who attends a meeting of the full council or its committees is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To "report" means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**
- m **A person present at a meeting of the full council or its committees may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**

- n** The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting of the full council or its committees at which they are entitled to be present.
- o** Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council.
- p** The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at a full council meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Council 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.
- q** The Chairman of a committee/sub committee, if present, shall preside at a meeting of the committee/sub committee. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee/sub committee (if there is one), if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.
- r** Subject to a meeting of the full council, its committees or sub committees being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.
- s** The chairman of a meeting of the full council, its committees or its sub committees 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 standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.
- t** Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question at a meeting of the full council, its committees and sub committees shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- u** The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
- i. the time and place of the meeting;
 - ii. the names of councillors present and absent;
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
 - vi. reference to the public participation session; and
 - vii. the resolutions made.
- v** A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting of the full council its committees or sub committees is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter
- w** No business may be transacted at a full council meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.
See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.

- x **If a meeting of the full council, its committees or sub committees is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- y A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 hours unless directed by the chairman and agreed by the meeting.

4. Committees & Sub Committees

- a **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
 - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
 - v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer 7 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
 - vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
 - vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
 - viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;
 - ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
 - x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
 - xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
 - xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

5. Ordinary council meetings

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.**

- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d
 - i. **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**
 - ii. Ordinary meetings of Great Witchingham Parish Council shall normally be held in Great Witchingham Village Hall and shall normally be held on the second Thursday of every odd month
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.**
- f **The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if there is one, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j
 - i. **In an election year, delivery by the councillors of their acceptance of office forms shall be undertaken prior to the start of the annual meeting of the council unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date.**
 - ii. **In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form shall be undertaken immediately after his election unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date**
- k Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the council, the order of business of the annual meeting shall be:
 - i. **in an election year, in the event of a councillor's absence from the annual meeting, to determine the date of the delivery of their acceptance of office**
 - ii. **in an election year, in the event of vacancies due to insufficient nominations to consider co-option**
 - iii. to receive and accept apologies from members unable to attend
 - iv. to receive any Declarations of Interest and Dispensations for the meeting
 - v. to nominate and appoint the authorised signatories to orders of payment
 - vi. to set the dates of the ordinary meetings of the council for the ensuing year
 - vii. to deal with matters pertaining to committees, sub committees and working groups currently in force in accordance with standing order 4
 - viii. to appoint members to local bodies and groups currently in force, to include substitutes if applicable

and thereafter proceed in the following order unless the council otherwise decides on the grounds of urgency:

- ix. to approve the minutes of the last meeting of the council
- x. to receive information on matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere in the meeting
- xi. to receive questions and comments from members of the public and those members with a pecuniary interest
- xii. to receive reports from the Police, County & District Councillors
- xiii. to receive reports from the clerk, chairman of the council and other members not covered elsewhere in the meeting
- xiv. to deal with financial matters
- xv. to deal with general matters
- xvi. to allow for an exchange of information
- xvii. to confirm the date, time and venue of the next council meeting

6. Extraordinary meetings of the council, committees and sub committees

- a **The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council at any time.**
- b **If the Chairman of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chairman of a committee or a sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or the sub-committee at any time.
- d If the chairman of a committee or a sub-committee does not call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by 2 members of the committee or the sub-committee, any 2 members of the committee or the sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or a sub-committee.

7. Previous resolutions

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 3 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9 below, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

8. Voting on appointments

- a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

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

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for and in any event shall relate to the performance of the council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 10 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer so that it can be understood at least 7 clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f Subject to standing order 9(e) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions to be included on the agenda shall be headed 'Motion to the Council' and the name of the councillor proposing the motion shall be included at the end of the proposed motion
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

10. Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer;
 - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
 - ii. to move to a vote;
 - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
 - iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub committee;
 - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
 - vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
 - vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
 - viii. to require a written report;
 - ix. to appoint a committee or sub committee and their members;
 - x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
 - xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
 - xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
 - xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
 - xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
 - xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory requirements);

- xvi. to adjourn the meeting;
- xvii. to deal with any business authorised by the Chairman of the meeting as urgent business or
- xviii. to close a meeting.

11. Management of Information

See also standing order 20.

- a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
- c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

12. Draft minutes

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i) above.
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d
 - i. If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:
 "The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings."
 - ii. If a member does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall request they include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:
 "The minutes of the meeting held on () were approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman. However Cllr () objected to minute () and asked for his objection to be recorded. In his view the decision (decision referred to and view of councillor noted)
- e **If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes of a full council meeting its committees**

or sub committees on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.

- f Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

13. Code of conduct and dispensations

See also standing order 3(v).

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- b Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the council's code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f) above, dispensations requests shall be considered at the beginning of the meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required.
- h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:**
 - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business or**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

14. Code of conduct complaints

- a Upon notification by Broadland District Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11 above, report this to the council.
- b Where the notification in standing order 14(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d) below.
- c The council may:
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is a legal requirement
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter.
- d **Upon notification by Broadland District Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. Proper Officer

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b The Proper Officer shall:
 - i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee**
 - **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
 - **provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time and place of the meeting (and where the meeting is called by councillors the notice shall be signed by those councillors and shall specify the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting).**

See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council, committee or sub committee

- ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 7 days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it
- iii. **convene a meeting of full council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office**
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors
- vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;

- viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if appointed)
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
See also standing order 22 below.
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the council in accordance with the council's financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the council and the council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the council to the Chairman or in his absence Vice-Chairman within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the council
- xvi. manage access to information about the council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the council (if any) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
See also standing order 23 below.

16. Responsible Financial Officer

- a The council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

17. Accounts and accounting statements

- a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide (England).
- b All payments by the council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the council's financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor at each of its meetings after 31 July, and 30 November in each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the council's receipts and payments for each period;
 - ii. the council's aggregate receipts and payments for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the period being reported

and which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the council's receipts and payments for the last period and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, as required by proper practices, for

consideration and approval.

- e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and applying the form of accounts on a receipts and payments basis for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors with the meeting papers for the month of May. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June

18. Financial controls and procurement

- a The council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£25,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise
- b Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least biennially in each even year for fitness of purpose.
- c **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(f) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).**
- d Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
 - i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
 - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.

- e Neither the council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- f **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £181,302 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £4,551,413 for a public works contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU.**
- g **A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £363,424 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,551,413 for a works contract; or £820,370 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.**

19. Handling Staff matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of the council, is subject to standing order 11 above.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chairman of the council or, if he is not available, the vice-chairman of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to council at its next meeting.
- c The chairman of council or in his absence, the vice-chairman shall conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported to the council at its next meeting.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff shall contact the chairman of council in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the council.
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the clerk relates to the chairman of the council, this shall be communicated to the vice chairman, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the council.
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- g In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).

20. Responsibilities to provide Information

See also standing order 21.

- a In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.
- b The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.

21. Responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation

(Below is not an exclusive list). *See also standing order 11.*

- a The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
- b The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.
- c The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.
- d The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.
- e The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.
- f The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.

22. Relations with the press/media

- a Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

23. Execution and sealing of legal deeds

See also standing orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvii) above.

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b Subject to standing order 23(a) above, any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.

24. Communicating with District and County Councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of Broadland District Council and Norfolk County Council representing the area of the council.
- b Unless authorised by the council, a copy of any letter sent to Broadland District Council or Norfolk County Council shall not be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the council.

25. Restrictions on councillor activities

- a. Unless authorised by a resolution, no councillor shall:
 - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

26. Standing Orders generally

- a. All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b. A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9 above.
- c. The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d. The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

Any modifications to the approved document are expressed in the form of ~~strike through~~ for deletion and underlining for additions to text.