

St Mawgan-in-Pydar Parish Council

Standing Orders

2017/2018

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Adapted from NALC Model Standing Orders 2013 (as AMENDED 2016)

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How to use model 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.

Meetings of full council, councillors, the Responsible Financial Officer and Proper Officer are subject to many statutory requirements. A council should have standing orders to confirm those statutory requirements. A council should have standing orders to control the number, place, quorum, notices and other procedures for committee and sub-committee meetings because these are subject to fewer statutory requirements. If it does not, committees and sub-committees may adopt their own standing orders.

Model standing orders that are in bold type contain statutory requirements. It is recommended that councils adopt them without changing them. Other model standing orders not in bold are designed to help councils operate effectively but do not contain statutory requirements, so they may be adopted as drafted or amended to suit a council's needs. For convenience, the word "councillor" is used in model standing orders and includes a non-councillor with or without voting rights unless otherwise stated.

A model standing order that includes brackets like this '()' requires information to be inserted by a council. A model standing order that includes the term 'OR' provides alternative options for a council to choose from when determining standing orders.

The model standing orders do not include model 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.

Model financial regulations are available to councils in membership of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) or One Voice Wales (OVW).

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 derived from an item 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 becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless 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.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k) below, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient, but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original 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 of the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the

debate on a motion except:

- i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. in exercise of a right of reply.
- p During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the 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 her/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, sub-committee or working group 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 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) above, the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

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 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) above is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. Meetings generally

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

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting of the council, its committees or sub-committees, does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting.**
- d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend, in respect of the business on the agenda, provided that they have previously notified either the Chairman or the Clerk of their desire to do so.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) above shall not exceed 10 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- g Subject to standing order 3(f) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than (2) minutes, *or less depending on the **number** of members of the public wishing to speak in the allotted public participation time.*

- h In accordance with standing order 3(e) 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 who speaks at a meeting of the council shall raise their hand when requested to speak and must address the council through the chairman and shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- j 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.
- k **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- l **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.**
- m **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.**
- n **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors or councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- o **The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote. See standing orders 7 (h) and (i) below for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the council.**
- p **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- q 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. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
 - v. if there was a public participation session; and
 - vi. the resolutions made.

- r **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.**
- s **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless a quorum is present. The quorum for St Mawgan in Pydar Parish Council shall be 4.**
See standing order 5d (viii) below for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.
- t **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate, the clerk shall be delegated to make appropriate arrangements for the handling of the business.** The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- u Except at the discretion of the Chairman, a meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 hours, unless a resolution is made to extend the meeting. Any business not transacted shall be carried over to the next meeting or such other date as the Chairman may decide.

4. Filming and recording of meetings

- a Whilst a meeting of the Council, its committees, sub committees is open to the public, any person, if present, may:
 - i. film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting;
 - ii. use any other means for enabling persons not present, to see or hear 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 Oral reporting, commentary or broadcasting is not permitted during any part of a meeting of the council, its committees, sub committees or working groups.
- c An individual must be present and able to use their equipment in order to film, photograph or audio record a meeting. There will be no opportunity to report on any part of the meeting where the council has resolved to exclude the press and public.
- d Disruptive behaviour
 - i. No filming, photographing or audio recording of a meeting should be carried out in such a way as to disrupt the proceedings of the meeting.
 - ii. If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their behaviour, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be instructed to cease filming, photographing or audio recording. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
 - iii. If a resolution under standing order 4 d ii) above is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the

meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

- e Members of the Council recording meetings are reminded of their obligations under the council's Code of Conduct in respect of confidential matters.

5. Committees and sub-committees

- a **Unless the council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the council.**
- c **Unless the council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of full council;
 - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 5 (b) and (c) above, appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
 - v. may, subject to standing orders 5 (b) and (c) above, appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer 7 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend
 - vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the 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 shall be no less than four;
 - 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.

6. Working Groups

- a. Working Groups will generally be appointed on an annual basis to consider various areas of the council's responsibility.
- b. Working Groups will not, unless specifically delegated by Council, have any decision-making powers but will report back with recommendations to full Council which will be the decision-making body for their areas of responsibility.
- c. As Working Groups are not decision-making bodies they will not be required to meet in public.
- d. After a Working Group meeting the Working Group shall present a report of its activities to the next full Council Meeting or extraordinary meeting of the council.
- e. A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by the Staffing Working Group is subject to standing order 13 b (confidentiality).

7. Ordinary council meetings

- a In an election year, the annual meeting of the council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.**
- b In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a council shall be held on such day in May as the council may direct.**
- c If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d In addition to the annual meeting of the council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the council directs.**
- e The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if any) of the Council.**
- f The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until her/his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the council.**
- g The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless s/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, s/he shall preside at the meeting until a successor**

Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

- i In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the council, s/he shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. S/he may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

- j Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman (if any) of the Council at the annual meeting of the council, the business of the annual meeting shall include:**
 - i. In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
 - i. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the council;
 - ii. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
 - iii. Appointment of members to existing working groups.
 - iv. Appointment of any new committees or working groups in accordance with standing order 5 above;
 - v. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future (if applicable).
 - vi. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
 - vii. Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment;
 - viii. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks;
 - ix. Review of the council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
 - x. Review of the council's complaints procedure;
 - xi. Review of the council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998; (General Data Protection Regulation ("GDPR") will come into force on 25 May 2018). Review of the council's policy for dealing with the press/media; and
 - xii. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the full council up to and including the next annual meeting of full council.

8. Extraordinary meetings of the council and committees and sub-committees

- a The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council at any time.**

- b If the Chairman of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary**

meeting of the council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.

- c The chairman of a committee (or working group) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee (or the working group) at any time.
- d If the chairman of a committee (or working group), does not, or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by 2 members of the committee (or working group), any 2 members of the committee (or working group) may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee (or working group).

9. 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 7 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 11 below, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 9 (a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

10. 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.

11. 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 pertains to an item on the agenda. Notification of items for the agenda must be given to the Proper Officer at least 7 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c If the wording or subject of a proposed agenda item or motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the meeting or, as the case may be,

the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the item shall be included or rejected.

- d Subject to standing order 11 (c) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.

12. 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. a proposal derived from discussion of an agenda item;
 - iii. to move to a vote;
 - iv. to defer consideration of a motion;
 - v. to refer a motion to a particular committee, sub-committee or working party
 - vi. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
 - vii. to change the order of business on the agenda;
 - viii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
 - ix. to require a written report;
 - x. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
 - xi. to extend the time limits for speaking;
 - xii. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
 - xiii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
 - xiv. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
 - xv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
 - xvi. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory requirements);
 - xvii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - xviii. to close a meeting.

13. Handling confidential or sensitive information

- a The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.
- b Councillors and staff shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest or that have been declared as confidential by the Council.
- c Members of the council are reminded of their obligation under the council's Code of Conduct in respect of confidential matters.
- d Any member who disobeys Standing Order 13 (b) may be removed from a Committee

and Working Group by resolution of the Council and the matter will be reported to the Monitoring Officer.

14. 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 12 (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 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 St Mawgan in Pydar Parish Council held on [date] in respect of St Mawgan in Pydar Parish Council 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.”
- e Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

15. Code of conduct, Complaints and Dispensations

See also standing order 3(r) above.

General

- a The Council has adopted the Cornwall Code of Conduct for City, Community, Parish and Town Councils which will apply to all councillors and members of the public co-opted to serve on Committees and sub Committees of the Council in respect of the entire meeting.

All interests arising from the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council will be recorded in the minutes giving the existence and nature of the interest.

- b Members must have particular regard to their obligation to record and leave the room for certain matters in which they have an interest as defined by the Code of Conduct or by relevant legislation.
- c The Council shall maintain for public inspection, a Register of Members' interests that is compliant with the Code of Conduct and with relevant legislation.

Members and the Code of Conduct

- d All councillors and members of the public co-opted to serve on Council committees, sub committees and working groups shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.
 - e All councillors and members of the public co-opted to serve on Council committees, sub committees and working groups shall maintain a Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, and must update their register by notifying the Monitoring Officer and the Clerk of any changes within 28 days.
 - f All councillors shall undertake training in the code of conduct within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.
 - g Unless granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights who has registered a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in relation to any item of business being transacted at a meeting, shall leave the room whenever the item is being discussed, including any part of the meeting where the public are entitled to speak.
 - h Unless granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights who has registered a non-registerable interest in relation to any item of business being transacted at a meeting, shall leave the room whenever the item is being discussed, including any part of the meeting where the public are entitled to speak.
 - i Where a non-registerable interest arises from membership of an outside body as defined in 3.5a of the council's code of conduct, a councillor remains in the room to address the meeting, provide a short statement and answer questions for no more than three (3) minutes before leaving the room at the request of the Chairman.
- 2.1 Code of Conduct 2.6 –in the council's Code of Conduct relating to gifts and hospitality state: 'A Member of the Council must not accept any gifts or hospitality that you are offered or receive in connection with your official duties as a member that could be seen by the public as likely to influence your judgement in these matters. There is no requirement to register or declare any gifts or hospitality which have been offered or received.'
- j A Member of the council may, for the purposes of his duty as a member but not otherwise, inspect any document which has been considered by a committee or by the council. The Proper Officer or Solicitor to the Council may decline to allow inspection of any document which is protected by other legislation or in the event of legal proceedings would be protected by privilege arising from the relationship of solicitor

and client. All Minutes kept for any Committee shall be open for the inspection of any member of the council during office hours.

Allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct

- k Notification of any complaint shall remain confidential to the Proper Officer of the Council until such time as the matter has been concluded, when the outcome of the complaint shall be reported to a meeting of full council.
- l Where the notification relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of that fact, who, upon receipt in respect of that matter as such until the complaint is resolved.
- m Where a notification relates to a complaint made by an employee (not being the Proper Officer) the Proper Officer shall ensure that the employee in question does not deal with any aspect of the complaint
- n The council may:
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- o References to a notification shall be taken to refer to a communication of any kind which relates to a breach or an alleged breach of the code of conduct by a councillor.

Upon notification by the Monitoring Officer of the Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the council shall consider any recommendations of the Monitoring Officer and what, if any, action to take against him in accordance with the recommendations. The Council has no ability to impose its own sanctions against a member found in breach of the Code of Conduct.

Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office but may include removal from one or more committees of the Council or restricted access to council premises except to attend meetings.

- p Upon notification by the Unitary Council that it has investigated a complaint against a councillor or non-voting councillor and no breach has been found, the clerk shall report the decision to the next meeting of the council.

Dispensations

- q The Council has adopted a policy for the issuing of dispensations which is in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct. It is attached to these Standing Orders as an appendix.

- r This policy shall apply to all meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees.
- s No dispensation will be awarded for any meeting where there are no minutes of the proceedings.

16. 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, or a committee, serve on councillors, by delivery or post at their residences,** or by email (provided any such email contains the title of the proper officer), **a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda.**
See standing order 3(b) above for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3 (c) above for a meeting of a committee.
 - ii. **give public notice of the time, place and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the council convened by councillors is signed by them);**
See standing order 3(b) above for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) above for a meeting of a committee.
 - 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. retain acceptance of office forms from councillors;
 - vi. retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
 - vii. assist with responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998 (or GDPR from May 2018), in accordance with and subject to the council's policies and procedures relating to the same;
 - viii. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
 - ix. 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.
 - x. refer a planning application received by the council to the Chairman or in her/his absence the Vice-Chairman of the Council and the Planning Working Group 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;
 - xi. Where the Planning Authority exercises its protocol, and offers the Council a further opportunity to comment or exercise options put to it within a 5-day period,

- the Clerk to the Council is delegated responsibility to respond, after consultation with the Planning Working Group.
- xii. manage access to information about the council via the publication scheme.

17. 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.

18. Accounts and accounting statements

- a The council has established financial regulations for the management of its finances which form part two of the document

19. Handling staff matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of council is subject to standing order 13 above.
- b The council shall appoint a staffing committee to consist of the present chairman, vice-chairman and past chairman of the council, which will meet as and when required for staffing issues and staff appraisals.
- c The clerk shall notify the chairman of the council or, if he is not available, the vice-chairman of the council of any absence occasioned by illness or other reason.
- d The chairman of the staffing committee or in his absence, the vice-chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and is subject to approval by resolution by the staffing committee.
- e Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the council's clerk shall contact the chairman of council or in his absence, the vice-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 staffing committee.
- f Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the clerk relates to the chairman or vice-chairman of the council, this shall be communicated to another member of staffing committee, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the staffing committee.
- g Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters as confidential and secure.

- h The council shall keep all written records relating to employees secure. All details will be kept by the Chairman of the council and or/the clerk.
- i Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 20(f) and (g) above shall be provided only to (post holder) and/or the Chairman of the Council.

20. Requests for information

- a Requests for information held by the council shall be handled in accordance with the council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998 (GDPR from May 2018).

21. 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.

22. Execution and sealing of legal deeds

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **Subject to standing order 22 (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.**

23. Communicating with Unitary Authority councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of the Unitary Authority representing the area of the council.

24. 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.

25. 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 requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least 7 councillors 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 after he has delivered his acceptance of office form.
- d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

Appendix 1 – Dispensations

1. **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.
2. 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.
3. 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.

Subject to standing orders 15 (e) and (g) above, dispensations requests shall be considered at the beginning of the meeting of the council, or committee or a sub-committee for which the dispensation is required.

4. **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 15 (f) 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.**