



LISS Parish Council Standing Orders

(Provisions in **bold** type reflect statutory requirements)

Adopted at Council meeting 16th February 2015

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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 or the agreement 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- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.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 simply negate the motion by adding 'not' or such other word
- 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 to a motion shall not be considered unless notice of it is given during debate on that motion and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing.
- 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 Subject to standing order 1(j) below, only one amendment shall be debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- j 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.
- k A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion without the chairman's permission.
- l The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- m Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried with the agreement of the mover of the original motion, he shall have a right of reply at the end of the debate of each amendment and at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote. Where an amendment is carried against the wishes of the mover of the original motion, the mover of that amendment shall have a right of reply on subsequent amendments and at the end of the debate on the substantive motion

n Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may not speak more than once in the debate on a motion except:

- i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor; after he has spoken;
- 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.

o 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. A personal explanation shall be confined to a material part of a previous speech by him/her in the same debate, which may have been misunderstood.

p A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.

q When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except the following, which may be moved without notice:

- 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 extend the time limits for speaking;
- vi. to ask a councillor or member of the public to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
- vii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public from the room where the meeting is being held, for disorderly conduct;
- viii. to defer consideration of the matter under debate
- ix. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
- x. to require a written report;
- xi. to exclude the public and press on the basis of (a) specified ground(s) for treating the matter as confidential or sensitive and that it is contrary to the public interest for the press and public to remain;
- xii. to adjourn the meeting;
- xiii. temporarily to suspend the meeting;
- xiv. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
- xv. to close the meeting;
- xvi. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory requirements.

- r The following may be moved without notice:
 - i to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes
 - ii to appoint a committee, sub-committee, working party or advisory group

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(q) 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. The chairman of the meeting may request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If such 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 or the room where the meeting is being held. 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 suspending temporarily or closing the meeting.

3 Meetings generally

F Full Council meetings
 C Committee meetings
 S Sub-Committee meetings

F	(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.
F	(b) The minimum three clear days for notice of a Council 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	(c) The minimum three clear days' public notice for a Committee meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting.
F C	(d) Meetings shall be open to the press and 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. Their exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for their exclusion.
F	(e) Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence during a meeting at a point designated on the agenda for public participation or designated by the chairman
F	(f) The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) above shall not exceed 20 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
F	(g) Subject to standing order 3(f) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
F	(h) A question posed by a member of the public under 3(e) 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.
F	(i) A person shall stand when requesting to speak and when speaking, unless permitted by the chairman to remain seated.
F	(j) A member of the public who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
F	(k) Only one member of the public 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.

F C	<p>(l) A person may not orally report or comment about a meeting as it takes place if he is present at the meeting of a parish council or its committees but otherwise may</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting; j use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later; or k report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting.
F C	<p>(m)The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the reporting of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.</p>
F	<p>(n) Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if any).</p>
F	<p>(o) The Chairman, if present, shall normally 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.</p>
F C S	<p>(p) Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors with voting rights present and voting.</p>
F C S	<p>(q)Subject to SO 5(j) and (k) below (election of the Chairman at the Annual Meeting of the council) 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.</p>
F C S	<p>(r)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 or abstained. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.</p>
F C S	<p>(s) The minutes of a meeting shall include a record of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the time and place of the meeting; ii. the names of councillors present and absent; iii. the names of councillors arriving late or leaving early iv. interests that have been declared by 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. if there was a public participation session a summary of the public participation session vii. the resolutions made.

F	(t) If a councillor is absent for 6 months or more, the councillor will cease to hold office unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. he has submitted reasons for his continued absence which are accepted by the Council before the expiration of those 6 months ii. any reason submitted and the Council's decision shall be recorded in the minutes.
F C S	(u) 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.
F	(v) No business may be transacted at a meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the council are present and ii. in no case shall the quorum of a full council meeting be less than six.
F C S	(w) If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no further business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be closed. The undecided business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
F C S	(x) A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 hours including any period of adjournment unless the majority of Members vote to sit for a further period not exceeding half an hour.
F C S	(y) The decision of the chairman of a meeting on any question of interpretation of Standing Orders or the conduct of business shall be final. This provision may not be suspended.

4 Committees and sub-committees

- a** The full council shall appoint or may dissolve each and every committee of the council. The full council or (unless the council determines otherwise) a committee may appoint or dissolve sub-committees, advisory committees and working groups as may be necessary, and:
- i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. any sub-committee or advisory committee or working group comprising a majority of non-councillors with voting rights, shall not have delegated powers;
 - iii. the full council shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the council;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (d), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee, sub-committee, advisory committee or working group;

- v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (d), appoint and determine the terms of office of named 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 no later than the day before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
- vi. shall permit a committee, subcommittee, advisory committee or working group to appoint its own chairman at its first meeting and at each first meeting after the annual council meeting, provided that no member holds more than one chairmanship of a committee;
- vii. shall determine the quorum for a committee, sub-committee, working group or advisory committee which should be no less than one-half of its members (or, in the event of an uneven number, one half of the total number less one);
- viii. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee, sub-committee, advisory committee or working group;
- ix. may permit the chairman of the committee, sub-committee, advisory committee or working group to determine how members of the public may participate at the meeting
- x. may determine whether longer notice than the statutory minimum notice set out in SO 13 below, is required;
- xi. shall consider and determine any recommendation to terminate an arrangement for co-option of a particular member.

- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the council.** Non-councillors may take a full part in the discussions of a committee but may not vote. (Non-councillors of sub-committees, advisory committees and working groups may be permitted by their terms of reference to vote, but in that case the sub-committee or working group shall not have delegated powers, in accordance with SO 4(a)(ii) above).
- c With the exception of the Staff Committee members of the council not appointed to a committee or sub-committee may attend and, with the permission of the Chairman, participate in discussion on any item but may not vote.
- d **Unless the council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee or its sub-committees or of a working group or its sub-groups may be non-councillors.**
- e The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the council, ex-officio, shall be voting members of every committee, and of every sub-committee unless they signify that they do not wish to serve.

5 Ordinary council meetings

Annual 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 7.30 pm.
- 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 annual Parish meeting shall take place on the third Wednesday in March unless the Council agrees otherwise
- f **Prior to the start of the annual meeting In an election year Councillors must deliver to the Proper Officer their acceptance of office forms.**
- g **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. No member shall hold the office of Chairman for more than four consecutive years.**
- h **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.**
- i **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, 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.**
- j **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 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.**
- k **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 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 must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

I 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. **Delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form**
- ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting of the council;
- iii. Consideration of any issues or recommendations arising from the minutes (whether draft or confirmed) of the last meetings of committees;
- iv. Appointment of any new committees, sub-committees, advisory committees or working groups in accordance with standing order 4 above;
- v. Appointment of members to committees, subcommittees, advisory committees and working groups;
- vi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
- vii. **Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the council up to and including the next annual meeting, in accordance with paragraph (m) below**

Viii To consider the payment of any subscriptions falling to be paid annually

IX To agree which of the Council's procedures policies and arrangements shall be reviewed in the forthcoming year by the Review Committee. This may include any of the following :

- (i) Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
- (ii) review of the terms of reference for committees;
- (iii) review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations.
- (iv) review of arrangements, including any charters and agency agreements, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities;
- (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;
- (vi) review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment;
- (vii) confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks;
- (viii) review of the council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
- (ix) review of the council's complaints procedure;
- (x) review of the council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998;
- (xi) review of the council's policy for dealing with the press/media;

Other Council Meetings

m Ordinary meetings of the Council should normally be held on the third Monday of

each month at 7.30pm. There will normally be no meeting in August.

n The order of business for Council meetings, unless the Council otherwise decides shall be as set out below:

- (i) Apologies for absence by Councillors
- (ii) Declarations of interest by Councillors
- (iii) To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the council and authorise the chairman to sign them, if appropriate as amended.
- (iv) To receive such communications as the Chairman of the meeting may wish to lay before the Council.
- (v) To receive reports from County Councillors and District Councillors
- (vi) To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.
- (vii) To dispose of outstanding business and matters arising from the last meeting.
- (viii) To answer pre-notified questions from councillors
- (ix) To authorise the signing of orders for payment.
- (x) To consider correspondence addressed to the Council
- (xi) To consider motions in the order in which they have been notified.
- (xii) To consider any issues or recommendations arising from minutes of committees (whether draft or confirmed).
- (xiii) To receive reports on matters of concern from councillors
- (xiv) to receive reports from representatives of or councillors attending meetings of outside bodies
- (xv) To authorise the sealing of documents.

6 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 3 councillors, any 3 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 3 councillors.**
- c The chairman of a committee, sub-committee, advisory committee or working group may convene an extraordinary meeting of that body at any time.
- d An extraordinary meeting of a committee, sub-committee, advisory committee or working group may also be convened by the members of that body if not less than one half of the members of that body make a request in writing to the Clerk.

7 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.

8 Motions requiring written notice

- 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 Subject to SO 1(q) and (r) 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 four clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day the notice is given nor the day of the meeting nor weekends and public holidays.

- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with paragraph (b) above, correct grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion but shall not alter the meaning of the proposed motion without the proposer's consent.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with paragraph (b) above is not clear in its 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 four clear days before the meeting.
- e If the Proper Officer considers the wording or subject of a proposed motion is not in accordance with (a) above, 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 paragraph (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 received shall be recorded in a book for that purpose and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded in a book for that purpose with an explanation by the Proper Officer for their rejection.
- i A Motion shall not be reconsidered within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least four councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with this standing order, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- j When a motion moved pursuant to paragraph(b) above has been disposed of, no similar motion in respect of that item of business may be moved within a further six months

9 Handling confidential or sensitive information

- a Unless marked as 'exempt' the agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise compromise information disclosure of which would not be in the public interest.
- b Councillors and staff shall not disclose information marked as 'exempt' 'confidential' or 'sensitive' on the agenda and disclosure of which would not be in the public interest, unless and until the meeting at which the information is to be discussed decide that the press and public need not be excluded during its consideration.

- c Councillors and staff who come into possession other than by receipt of an agenda and supporting papers, of information which they know or ought reasonably to be aware is confidential or sensitive information, shall not disclose that information to any person or organisation outside the council unless by direction of the council or a court of law or organisation authorised to require its disclosure.

10 Draft minutes

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda of 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, unless under a separate item “Matters arising from the minutes”
- c Draft minutes of committees and sub-committees shall be circulated to councillors of the relevant committee or sub-committee for informal comment on their accuracy, and shall then be submitted to the full Council for information and comment, and consideration of any issue that requires the Council’s consent. The accuracy of the draft minutes shall be a matter for the following meeting of the relevant committee or sub-committee.
- d 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.
- e Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes and any audio recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

11 Code of conduct and dispensations

- a All councilors and non-councillors with voting rights are subject to standing order 3(u) on disclosable interests and must familiarise themselves with and observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the council .¹
- b Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councilor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from the meeting room 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.

¹ The Code of Conduct governing Councillors behaviour is contained in “Code Of Members’ Conduct” Adopted by Liss Parish Council 16th July 2012

- c Unless he had been granted a dispensation, a councilor or non- councilor with voting rights shall withdraw from the room where the meeting is held 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** before the meeting.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer before the meeting or 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 **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with (b) above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:**
 - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business or**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

12 Code of conduct complaints

- a Upon notification by the District Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 9 above, report the notification to the council.
- b Where the notification in (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 or an external adviser 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 (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 required by law; and
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter.
- d **Upon notification by the District Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

13 Proper Officer

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- b **Public notice of the time, place and business to be transacted must be given by the proper officer at least three clear days before a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the council convened by councillors must be signed by them);**
- c Subject to standing order 8 the agenda must include all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least three days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;
- d Additional items of business may be added by the proper officer at less than the requisite period of notice with the consent of the Chairman (in respect of Council meetings) or the relevant chairman (in the case of committee and sub-committees) and provided
 - (i) the agenda gives reason(s) why the item(s) could not have been considered at the previous meeting and
 - (ii) why the item(s) could not wait until the next regular meeting or an extraordinary meeting convened for the purpose and
 - (iii) asking for councillors' agreement to consider the matter at less than the requisite notice.
- e **At least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee and a sub-committee the proper officer shall serve on councillors and co-opted members, by delivery or post at their residences, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the business to be transacted, including all reports to be considered at the meeting; where it is not practicable to serve the summons by post or hand delivery, and after agreement with the Chairman or (in his absence or unavailability the Vice Chairman) the summons may be served by e mail provided the summons includes the title and electronic signature of the proper officer.**

- f The proper officer shall
- (i) make available to the press and public all reports to be considered in public by the Council its committees and sub-committees
 - (ii) classify as 'exempt' any report or minute or part thereof in respect of which in his opinion the council committee or sub-committee is likely to exclude the press and public during its consideration;
 - iii keep proper records required before and after meetings
 - iv **convene a meeting of full council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
 - v facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;
 - vi receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
 - vii retain acceptance of office forms from councillors;
 - viii retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
 - ix respond to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the council's policies and procedures relating to the same, including formulation of any Publication Scheme
 - x receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
 - xi manage the organisation, storage of, access to and destruction of information held by the council in paper and electronic form including the protection of information held under the Data Protection Act
 - xii arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
 - 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; record every planning application notified to the council and the council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
 - xiv refer a planning application received by the council to the Chairman of the Planning Committee or in his absence to an appropriate member of the Planning Committee within five working days of receipt and to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of Planning Committee
 - xv retain custody of the seal of the council (if any).
 - xvi 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.

14 Accounts and accounting statements

- a The council shall appoint a Responsible Financial Officer from its employees and an appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer during his absence.
- b "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide (England)'
- c All payments by the council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the council's financial regulations.
- d Orders for the payment of money which is provided for in the approved budget of the

Council shall be signed by two members and the Proper Officer and subsequently authorised by resolution of the Council

- e Orders for the payment of money which is not provided for in the approved budget shall be preceded by a resolution of the Council
- f The Responsible Financial Officer shall submit to the Council's Finance Committee as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the council's receipts and payments for each quarter;
 - ii. the council's aggregate receipts and payments for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported

and which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends

- g As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall submit:
 - i. to the Council's Finance Committee a statement summarising the council's receipts and payments for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the full council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 1 of the annual return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- h The year end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and applying the form of accounts determined by the council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March. A completed draft annual return shall be presented to each member of the Council's Finance Committee before the end of the following month of May. The annual return of the council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

15 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. procurement policies (subject to paragraph (c) below) including the setting of values for different procedures where a contract has an estimated value of less than £20,000.

- b Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c Financial regulations shall reflect the requirements of UK procurement legislation from time to time² and must provide in any event that a proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £20,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in paragraph (d) below.**
- 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; reasons for not accepting the lowest tender or any, must be recorded in the minutes of the Council or relevant committee or sub-committee.

16 Handling staff matters

- a A matter relating to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of the Council, a committee or sub-committee must be treated as 'exempt'.
- b The annual meeting of the council shall appoint a Staff Committee with delegated powers to deal with such staff matters as it considers appropriate subject to the right of full Council under SO 5m (xii) above to consider issues arising from the draft minutes (if necessary after having excluded the press and public)
- c The Council shall handle all issues in relation to its staff according to its Staff Policy

² As at January 2015 contracts likely to exceed £138,893 have to be procured according to the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 and the Utilities Contracts regulations 2006

- d The council shall keep all written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured and locked and electronic records shall be password protected and encrypted, and subject to any further requirements for security of records promulgated from time to time under the Data Protection Act.
- e In particular, 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.

17 Requests for information

- a Requests for information held by the council shall be handled by the Proper Officer in accordance with the council's policy in respect of handling requests under relevant legislation, including the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998. Any proposed refusal to disclose information shall first be the subject of consultation with the Chairman of the Council and relevant committee chairman.
- b A review of a refusal by the proper Officer or his representative to disclose information, shall be carried out by the Review committee or a sub-committee thereof, which shall have delegated authority from the council to determine the matter.
- c Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman or the Vice Chairman of the Council

18 Relations with the press/media and public

- a Subject to (b) below 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.
- b No councillor may indicate nor give the impression to the press, other media or public that he or she is speaking on behalf of the Council, without having their proposed comments agreed by the Chairman unless they are the authorised lead Councillor on any project. In any other situation a councillor must indicate to the press media or public that he or she is speaking only in a personal capacity, but is entitled to refer to himself as 'councillor'. This order does not apply to councillors who have been appointed to manage accounts under the Council's social media policy when using the relevant social media account in accordance with that policy.

19 Execution and sealing of legal deeds³

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

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

21 Restrictions on councillor activities

- a. Unless authorised by a resolution, no councillor shall:
 - i. inspect any land and/or premises not in the council's ownership but which the council has a right or duty to inspect;
 - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions to any member of staff.

³ See also standing orders 13 f (xii) and (xv) above.