



MODEL STANDING ORDERS 2018 (revised 2023) (ENGLAND)

**ADOPTED BY LYMINGTON
AND PENNINGTON TOWN
COUNCIL**

Adopted at Annual Council Meeting 17 May 2023

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INTRODUCTION

These model standing orders update the National Association of Local Council (NALC) model standing orders contained in “Local Councils Explained” by Meera Tharmarajah (© 2013 NALC). This publication contains new model standing orders which reference new legislation introduced after 2013 when the last model standing orders were published.

HOW TO USE MODEL STANDING ORDERS

Standing orders are the written rules of a local council. Standing orders are essential to regulate the proceedings of a meeting. A council may also use standing orders to confirm or refer to various internal organisational and administrative arrangements. The standing orders of a council are not the same as the policies of a council but standing orders may refer to them.

Local councils operate within a wide statutory framework. NALC model standing orders incorporate and reference many statutory requirements to which councils are subject. It is not possible for the model standing orders to contain or reference all the statutory or legal requirements which apply to local councils. For example, it is not practical for model standing orders to document all obligations under data protection legislation. The statutory requirements to which a council is subject apply whether or not they are incorporated in a council’s 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 council’s Responsible Financial Officer. Model financial regulations are available to councils in membership of NALC.

DRAFTING NOTES

Model standing orders that are in bold type contain legal and statutory requirements. It is recommended that councils adopt them without changing them or their meaning. Model standing orders not in bold are designed to help councils operate effectively but they do not contain statutory requirements so they may be adopted as drafted or amended to suit a council’s needs. It is NALC’s view that all model standing orders will generally be suitable for councils.

For convenience, the word “councillor” is used in model standing orders and, unless the context suggests otherwise, includes a non-councillor with or without voting rights.

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

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 chairperson 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 chairperson 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 chairperson of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairperson.
- 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 chairperson 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 chairperson of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairperson 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 chairperson 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 they 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 they considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting they are concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the chairperson of the meeting and their 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 chairperson 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 3 minutes without the consent of the chairperson 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 chairperson of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairperson of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairperson 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 chairperson 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 does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice.**
- 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, contributions or suggestions at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda, in accordance with the Council's Public Participation Scheme attached as Annex A to these Standing Orders.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in

accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 30 minutes unless directed by the chairperson of the meeting.

- g Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
- h In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairperson of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak.
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairperson of the meeting.
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairperson of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- l **Subject to standing order 3(m), a person who attends a meeting 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 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 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 Chairperson of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairperson of the Council (if there is one).**
- p **The Chairperson of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairperson is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairperson of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- q **Subject to a meeting 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.**
- r **The chairperson 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**
- **their casting vote whether or not they gave an original vote.**

See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairperson of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.

- **s 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 their vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

t 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 who are present and the names of councillors who are 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. if there was a public participation session; and
- vii. the resolutions made.

- **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.**

- **v No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.** *See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.*

- w **If a meeting 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.

- x A meeting shall not exceed a period of 3 hours.

4. 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 Unless otherwise decided by the Council, the Policy & Resources, Amenities and Planning Committees shall be known as Standing Committees.
- e Apologies for absence must be received by the Proper Officer at least 2 days prior to the meeting unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- f 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 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 two clear days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
 - vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, decide whether the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of each committee shall be elected at that meeting or by members of that committee at their first meeting of the committee;
 - vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairperson 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 **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.**
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson (if there is one) of the Council.**
- f **The Chairperson of the Council, unless they have resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g **The Vice-Chairperson of the Council, if there is one, unless they resign or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairperson of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h **In an election year, if the current Chairperson of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chairperson of the Council has been elected. The current Chairperson of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairperson 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 Chairperson of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual**

meeting until a new Chairperson of the Council has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairperson of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

- j Following the election of the Chairperson of the Council and Vice-Chairperson (if there is one) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:
- i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chairperson 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 Chairperson of the Council of their acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
 - iii. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
 - iv. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
 - v. Appointment of members to existing committees;
 - vi. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;
 - vii. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
 - viii. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.
 - ix. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
 - x. 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;
 - xi. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
 - xii. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
 - xiii. Review of the Council's Complaints Procedure;
 - xiv. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (*see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);

- xv. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
- xvi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- a **The Chairperson of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b **If the Chairperson of the Council does not 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 shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chairperson 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 chairperson 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 5 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, 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 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for 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 chairperson 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 for which it is tabled 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 5 clear days by 10.00am 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), 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) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least 4 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 chairperson 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 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 and numbered in the order that they are received.
- 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 other 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 or legal requirements);
- xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii. to close the 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**

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

- 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).
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairperson of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the chairperson of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

“The chairperson 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 their view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”

- e **If the Council’s gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes 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(u).

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless they have 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 they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- c Unless they have 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 they have another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they 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 the Proper Officer 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), a dispensation request shall be considered by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
 - 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;**
 - 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

Upon notification by the District or Unitary 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 them. 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, place and agenda (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) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;

ii. **convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chairperson of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office;**

iii. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**

iv. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**

- v. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vi. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- vii. 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;
- viii. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer(if appointed);
- ix. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- x. 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);
- xi. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(*see also standing order 23*);
- xii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiii. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xiv. retain custody of the seal of the Council.

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".
- 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 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 (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
 - ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;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 to Council:
 - i. a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter 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 apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. 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. procurement policies (subject to standing order 18c) including the setting of values for different procedures where a contract has an estimated value below **£30,000**.
- b Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £30,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(g) 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 tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one officer or councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
- e tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility;
- f Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- g A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £189,330 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £4,733,252 for a public works contract; or £663,540 for a social and other specific services 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.**
- h 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 £378,660 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,733,252 for a works contract; or £663,540 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

Staff matters and procedures are contained within the Lymington & Pennington Town Council Staff Handbook 2019.

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 Local Government (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).

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

24. **RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**

- a. Unless duly authorised 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 or legal 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 by at least 2 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.
- 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 chairperson of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

Public Participation at Town Council Meetings

Members of the public have a legal right to attend decision making meetings of the Council and its committees, except where they are excluded for specific items which need to be discussed in confidence (e.g. staffing matters or tenders for contracts).

Members of the public have no legal right to speak at meetings of the Council or its committees and so when they are allowed to do so it is considered a privilege. The Council sets aside time for public participation during which members of the public may make a representation, contribution, suggestion or at a Full Council meeting, ask a question. Councillors with a prejudicial interest in an agenda item may speak during public participation (and then leave the room when the item is considered).

Public participation is not an appropriate time for members of the public to complain about general problems such as the routine maintenance of facilities. Members of the public should contact the Town Clerk about such issues. Public participation is also not to be used to demand information that is already available to the public or will be made available in accordance with statute or to raise matters which are not within the control of or relevant to the Council.

Other than when invited to do so by the Chairperson, members of the public are not permitted to speak at the meeting as this confuses the roles of councillors, who participate in the meeting, and members of the public who observe it. If there is a possibility that a large number of people will wish to speak, the Chairperson will encourage people not to repeat comments made by earlier speakers or ask for a single representative to be appointed.

Public participation takes place near the start of the meeting immediately after declaration of interests to make everyone aware if a member has a prejudicial interest. Comments made during public participation are briefly minuted. Only the names of councillors with a prejudicial interest are recorded. Libellous, offensive and discriminatory comments are not minuted.

It is recognised that some members of the public may abuse the opportunity to speak. While the Chairperson will endeavour to ensure an answer to a question that has been properly notified in advance, this will be refused if continuous representations are made or repetitive questions asked.

Neither councillors nor officials are under any obligation to respond immediately or at all to comments or questions made during public participation. The Chairperson's decision to allow a question or require an answer to be given will be final. Members of the public do not have a right to force items onto the Council agenda.

The public have a legal right to attend Council and committee meetings but do not have a right to disrupt them. Members of the public should not heckle or otherwise disrupt and must respect the rulings of the chair. The Chairperson of any meeting has the right to exclude a disorderly person and to adjourn the meeting.

Rules

1. A maximum of twenty minutes will be set aside for public participation at Council and committee meetings. In exceptional circumstances the Chairperson has the discretion to extend this by a maximum of a further 10 minutes.
2. Questions may only be asked at Full Council meetings as the main decision making body with the exception of planning issues which may be made at meetings of the Planning Committee. The conduct of public participation will be regulated by the Chairperson having regard to the guidelines set out but with the right of discretion reserved.
3. Members of public wishing to speak will advise the Chairperson of the content or context of their subject prior to speaking. The Chairperson's decision on the relevance of a representation or question and on the method of dealing with any issue in connection with this procedure will be final. This includes the Chairperson's decision to allow a representation or question or require an answer to be given.
4. Questions:
 - Must be clear and concise and be relevant to matters for which the Council has powers or duties.
 - Only one question may be asked by any member of the public or organisation and the question must relate to a single topic.
5. Questions, representations, contributions or suggestions should not:
 - Contain offensive expressions or be personal or verbal attacks on any staff or member of the Council.
 - Divulge, or require the answer to divulge confidential or exempt information.
 - Repeat questions or representations previously asked at earlier meetings unless there has been a material change of circumstances.
6. Questions may only be asked of the Chairperson.
7. Members of the public wishing to ask a question at a Full Council or Planning meeting should provide the wording of the question and the following details to the Town Clerk by no later than 12.00 noon two days before the Full Council meeting or in the case of a planning application by 12.00 noon the day prior to the Planning Committee meeting:
 - Name, address and contact details of the person asking the question.
 - The name of an organisation if the question is being asked on their behalf.
 - The question to be asked.
 - Brief information about how the subject of the question relates to the person asking the question (e.g. as a resident of the area, as a recipient of a service, the owner of a property affected by a proposal).
8. The following process will apply at the meeting:
 - The Chairperson will invite representations to be made or questions to be asked at the meeting.

- The Chairperson will invite the member of the public to address the meeting from the floor using the microphone provided.
 - Up to a maximum of three minutes will be allowed to address the meeting. However, if two or more members of the public are concerned about the same topic only two may speak in support of the matter and two against. The first speaker in either case shall speak for a maximum of 3 minutes and the second for 2 minutes.
 - The Chairperson shall decide on whether or not a response is appropriate and if so shall respond or invite a Councillor or officer of the Council to respond which may take the form of:
 - (a) a direct oral response.
 - (b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
 - (c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written response circulated later to the questioner and made available to all members of Council and to the public.
9. The timing of questions and responses is controlled by the Town Clerk.
10. No debate will be allowed on any question or the response thereto with the exception of planning meetings where Councillors may ask questions for clarification.
11. Any person excluded from a meeting will lose the privilege of addressing any meeting for a period of 12 months or until such time as the Council may decide otherwise.