

LONGWICK-CUM-ILMER PARISH COUNCIL
STANDING ORDERS ADOPTED 15th SEPTEMBER 2015

Index of standing orders

Standing order	Page	Standing order	Page
1	Meetings	20	Relations with the press/media
2	Ordinary Council meetings	21	Liaison with County and District Councillors
3	Proper Officer	22	Financial matters
4	Motions requiring written notice	23	Code of conduct complaints
5	Motions not requiring written notice	24	Standing Orders generally
6	Rules of debate		
7	Code of conduct & dispensations		
8	Minutes		
9	Disorderly conduct		
10	Previous resolutions		
11	Voting on appointments		
12	Execution & sealing of legal deeds		
13	Committees and Sub-committees		
14	Extraordinary meetings		
15	Accounts and Financial Statement		
16	Restrictions on Councillors		
17	Confidential business		
18	Handling staff matters		
19	Requests for information		

1 Meetings

Mandatory for full Council meetings	●
Mandatory for committee meetings	●
Mandatory for 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 **When calculating the 3 clear days for notice of a meeting to councillors and the public, the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning shall not count.**

- c **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.**

- d Subject to standing order 1(c) above, members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.

- e The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing order 1(d) above] shall not exceed 10 minutes unless directed by the Chairman of the meeting.

- f Subject to standing order 1(e) above, each member of the public is entitled to speak only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 5 minutes.

- g In accordance with standing order 1(d) above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate.

- h In accordance with standing order 1(g) above, the Chairman may direct that a response to a

question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to an employee for a written or oral response.

- i Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Chairman.
- j Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chairman shall direct the order of speaking.

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:

- k
 - a) film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting
 - b) use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later;
 - c) report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting.

- l In accordance with standing order 1(c) above, the press shall be provided reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.

- m Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman (if any).

- n The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman, if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.

- o Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors or Councillors with voting rights, present and voting.

- p** The Chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote. (See also standing orders 2 (h) and (i) below for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman at the Annual Meeting of the Council)
- q** Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on any question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- r** The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

 - i. the time and place of the meeting;
 - ii. the names of Councillors present and absent;
 - iii. interests that have been declared by Councillors with voting rights;
 - iv. whether a Councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered; and
 - v. the resolutions made.
- s** A 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
- t** 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.
- u** 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.
- v** A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 hours

2 Ordinary Council meetings

See also standing order 1 above

- a In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.
- b In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.
- c If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.
- d In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.
- e The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.
- f The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- g The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if 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.
- h In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- i In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, 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.
- j Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman (if any) of the Council at

the annual meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows.

- i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chairman and Councillors of their declarations of acceptance of office forms unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date.**
- ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council.
- iii. To receive and note minutes of a committee
- iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by committees.
- v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, employees and other local authorities.
- vi. Review of the terms of references for committees.
- vii. Appointment of members to existing committees.
- viii. Appointment of any new committees, confirmation of the terms of reference, the number of members (including, if appropriate, substitute councillors) and receipt of nominations to them.
- ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations.
- x. Review of arrangements, including any charters, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities.
- xi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back.
- xii. In a year of elections, to make arrangements with a view to the council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future.
- xiii. Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment.
- xiv. Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.
- xv. Review of the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies.
- xvi. Review of the Council's complaints procedure.
- xvii. Review of the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- xviii. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media
- xix. Determining the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council for the year ahead including the next annual meeting of full council.

3 Proper Officer

- a The Council's Proper Officer shall be either the clerk or the deputy clerk only during the Proper Officer's absence. The Proper Officer and the deputy clerk only during the Proper Officer's absence shall fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer in standing orders.

- b The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following.
 - i. **Sign and serve on councillors by email or post at their residences a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council and a meeting of a committee at least 3 clear days before the meeting.**
 - ii. **Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**
 - iii. **Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office, in accordance with standing order 3(b)i above.**
 - iv. Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.
 - v. **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
 - vi. Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.
 - vii. Retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
 - viii. Keep proper records required before and after meetings;
 - ix. Process all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the Council's procedures relating to the same.
 - 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 and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form.
 - xii. Arrange for legal deeds to be signed by 2 councillors and witnessed (*See also standing orders 12(a)*)
 - xiii. Arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
 - xiv. Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in the minutes;
 - xv. Refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chairman or in his absence the Vice-Chairman within 2 working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of

the Parish Council.

xvi. Manage access to information about the council via the publication scheme.

4 Motions requiring written notice

- a No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Council's Proper Officer at least 5 clear days before the next meeting.
- b The Proper Officer may, before including a motion in the agenda received in accordance with standing order 4(a) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- c If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 4(a) above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer in clear and certain language at least 5 clear days before the meeting.
- d If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included or rejected in the agenda.
- e Having consulted the Chairman or councillors pursuant to standing order 4(d) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
- f Notice of every motion received in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be numbered in the order received and shall be entered in the minutes, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
- g Every motion rejected in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be duly recorded with a note by the Proper Officer giving reasons for its rejection in the minutes for that purpose, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
- h Every motion and resolution shall relate to the Council's statutory functions, powers and lawful obligations or shall relate to an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

5 Motions not requiring written notice

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

6 Rules of debate

- a. Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chairman.
- b. Subject to standing orders 4(a)–(e) above, a motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- c. Subject to standing order 3(b)(iii) above, a motion included in an agenda not moved by the councillor who tabled it, may be treated 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. Any amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f. If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.

- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the Chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the Chairman.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairman.
- j Subject to Standing Order 6(k) below, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chairman. No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.
- l The number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a councillor, is limited to one.
- 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 in respect of the substantive motion at the very end of debate and immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Unless permitted by the Chairman of the meeting, a Councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another Councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or in exercise of a right of reply.
- p During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A Councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman and his decision shall be final.

- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
- i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory requirements

s The Chairman shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote.

t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r) above, the contributions or speeches by a Councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 5 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

7 Code of conduct and dispensations

See also model standing orders 1(s) above

All councillors shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.

- a All Councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- b Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a Councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a Councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the council's code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is

- sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to standing orders 7(d) and (f) above, dispensations requests 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 7(e) above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:**
 - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business or**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

8 Minutes

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on Councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 5(a)(i) above.
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:
 - “The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- e Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

9 Disorderly conduct

No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.

- b If person(s) disregard the request of the Chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any Councillor or the Chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 9(b) above is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

10 Rescission of previous resolutions

- a A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least 4 councillors of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- b When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to standing order 10(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

11 Voting on appointments

- a Where more than 2 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. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

12 Execution and sealing of legal deeds

See also standing order 3(b)(xii) above

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution.

In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 12(a) above, any two members of the Council, may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.

13 Committees and Sub-committees

- a **Unless the council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the council.**
- c **Unless the council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. may permit committees to determine the dates of their meetings;
 - iii. shall appoint and determine the term of office of councillor members of such a committee so as to hold office no later than the next annual meeting;
 - iv. may appoint substitute councillors to a committee whose role is to replace ordinary councillors at a meeting of a committee if ordinary councillors of the committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer 5 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
 - v. an ordinary member of a committee who has been replaced at a meeting by a substitute member (in accordance with standing order 13(a)(iv) above) shall not be permitted to participate in debate or vote on business at that meeting and may only speak during any public participation session during the meeting;
 - vi. can in accordance with standing orders, dissolve a committee at any time.
- e Unless there is a Council resolution to the contrary, every committee may appoint a working group whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by resolution of the committee.

14 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 7 days of having been requested to do so by two councillors, those two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.**

- c The Chairman of a committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee at any time.
- d If the Chairman of a committee does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within 5 days of having been requested by to do so by 2 councillors, those 2 councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the 2 councillors.

15 Accounts and Financial Statement

- a All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Council's financial regulations, which shall be reviewed at least annually.
- b The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement summarising
 - i the Council's receipts and payments for the each quarter
 - ii the balances held at the end of a quarter.
 - iii A statement that should include a comparison with the budget for the financial year.

A Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March shall be presented to each councillor before the end of the following month of May. The Statement of Accounts of the Council (which is subject to external audit), including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to Council for formal approval before 30 June.

16 Restrictions on Councillors

- a Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a working group:
 - i inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - ii issue orders, instructions or directions.

17 Confidential business

- a Councillors and staff shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.
- b The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.

18 Handling staff matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of council is subject to standing order 17 above.
- b Subject to the council's policy regarding absences from work, the council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chairman or, if he is not available, the vice-chairman of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence at its next meeting.
- c The Chairman or in his absence, the vice-chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Clerk and the Clerical Assistant. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and is subject to approval by resolution by the council.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior employee or other employees shall contact the Chairman or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairman in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance and disciplinary matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by any employee relates to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, this shall be communicated to another member of the Council which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters as confidential and secure.
- g 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.
- h Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing orders 18(f) and (g) above if so justified.
- l Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 18(g) and (h) above shall be provided only to the Proper Officer and the Chairman of the Council.

19 Requests for information

- a Requests for information held by the council shall be handled in accordance with the council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- b Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman of the council. The Parish Council shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

20 Relations with the press/media

- a All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.
- b In accordance with the Council's policy in respect to dealing with the press and/or other media, councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media.

21 Liaison with District and County Councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillor(s) of the District and County Council representing its electoral ward.

22 Financial matters

- 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 22(c) below) including the setting of values for different procedures where a contract has an estimated value of less than £60,000.

- b Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c **Financial regulations shall confirm that a proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £60,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in standing order 22(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.
- f **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed £138,893 (or other threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time) the council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No. 5, as amended) and the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No. 6, as amended) apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the council must comply with EU procurement rules.**

23 Code of conduct complaints

- a Upon notification by the District or County Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a Councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 17 above, report this to the council.
- b Where the notification in standing order 23(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined, and the council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 23(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;
 - 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 or County Council that a 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.**

24 Standing orders generally

- a Any or every part of the standing orders, except those which are mandatory by law, may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, not mandatory by law, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of as least four councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 4 above.

- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor upon delivery of his declaration of acceptance of office

- d The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.