

## **MODEL STANDING ORDERS 2018 (ENGLAND) — UPDATED APRIL 2022**

National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

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## **Introduction**

This is version two of Model Standing Orders 2018 (England) updated on April 2022. Update to Model Standing Order 18 only.

### **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 chair 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 chair 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 chair of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chair.
- h. A councillor may move an amendment to their 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 chair 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 chair of the meeting.
- k. One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chair 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. When a Member speaks at a Council or Committee Meeting they must confine his remarks to the question then under discussion. Unless permitted by the chair 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/she/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 consider 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 chair 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 chair 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), 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 chair of the meeting.

The ruling of the Mayor or Chair on any point shall be final.

## **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 chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b. If person(s) disregard the request of the chair of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chair 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 chair 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 ●

The Town Council will endeavour to apply the statutory requirements to all 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, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with Standing Order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chair 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 chair of the meeting may direct that a written or



oral response be given. Questions will be answered by The Mayor, Chair of Standing Committees or the Town Clerk; at the discretion of the Chair other Councillors may be invited to respond. If the question cannot be answered on the evening, then a formal, written response will be made within 10 working days.

- i A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
  
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct comments to the chair of the meeting.
  
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chair 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. The Council will not permit filming of members of the public, children, the vulnerable or other members of the public who actively object to being filmed without undermining the broader transparency of the meeting.
  
- 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 Chair of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chair of the Council.
- p The Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting.
- o If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair 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 chair 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 a casting vote whether or not they gave an original vote.
- 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.

No protest or expression of dissent shall be entered upon the Minutes of the Council.

- 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 their 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.
- 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 two hours.

#### **4. Committees and Sub-Committees**

- a Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee (or working group) 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 Mayor on all Committees, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor shall be Members of every Standing Committee, Sub-Committee and working group how so ever established.
- e 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. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chair and vice chair of the standing committee;
  - vi. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chair at the first meeting of the committee;
  - vii. shall determine the place and notice requirements. The quorum for all Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups shall be one-third of Membership or a minimum of, but never less than, three;
  - viii. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
  - ix. 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;

- x. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
- xi. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee;
- xii. The Chair of a Committee may summon a special Meeting of that committee at any time. A Special Meeting shall also be summoned on the requisition in writing of not less than a quarter of the Members of the Committee;
- xiii. The Chair of any Committee shall ex-officio be a Member of all its Sub-Committees, who may elect a Chair of their number;
- xiv. All questions in Committee shall be determined by a majority of the votes of the Members present by a show of hands unless the Committee shall at the time decide otherwise. Provided, however, that on the demand made before the vote is taken, the vote shall be recorded on any original Motion, or on an Amendment which has become the substantive Motion, and in that case the vote shall be taken by a call of the names of all the Member of the Committee, and the answer of those present to the question put shall be recorded;
- xv. The conduct of the business of each Committee shall be limited to the Members thereof and officials. All order of debate and conduct shall be as defined for procedure at a Council Meeting.

## **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. In an Election year it will fill any Casual Vacancies that may apply. Any relevant business will also be conducted at this meeting.

- 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 7pm.
- 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 Chair (Mayor) and Vice-Chair (Deputy Mayor) of the Council.
- f The Chair of the Council, 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-Chair of the Council, if there is one, unless they resign or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chair of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- h In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chair of the Council has been elected. The current Chair of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair 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 Chair of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chair of the Council has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- j The Annual Meeting on the second Monday of May will be limited

to the election of The Mayor and The Deputy Mayor. The Council will reconvene the Annual Meeting again during May to appoint its Committees, Committee Chair's and Representatives.

- k In an election year, delivery by the Chair 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 Chair of the Council of their acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date.
- l Following the election of the Chair of the Council and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:
  - i. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
  - ii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
  - iii. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
  - iv. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
  - v. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
  - vi. Appointment of members to existing committees;
  - vii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with Standing Order 4;
  - 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. 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**

- a The Chair of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.
- b If the Chair 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.

## **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 12 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 6(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 chair 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 seven clear days before the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with Standing Order 8(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 8(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 seven 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 chair 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

- 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 9(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 chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the chair 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 chair 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 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 11(e) and Standing Order 19(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**

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless 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 has a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which

they had the interest.

- c Unless 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 12(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 12(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**

- a Upon notification by the District or Unitary 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 12, report this to the Council.
- b Where the notification in Standing Order 13(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chair of Council of this fact, and the Chair 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 13(d).
- c The Council may:
  - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
  - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter.
- d Upon notification by 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).
  - ii. convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his 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 there is one);
  - 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;
  - 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. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority;
  - xiv. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
  - xv. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect;
  - xvi. It shall be the responsibility of the Proper Officer to advise the Council of their need to appoint staff in the employment of administrative or manual posts subject to the necessary budgets being in place.

## **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;
  - 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.
- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
  - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council’s receipts and payments (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 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. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£25,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. The Proper Officer shall sign on behalf of the Council all Contracts agreed to be entered into by the Council or by any Committee of the Council duly authorised to enter into Contracts. The Proper Officer shall be delegated with authority to enter into any contract

that is in accordance with the policy of the Council, a Health & Safety requirement or a legal matter up to the value of £10,000. The Clerk should report such action to the Mayor/Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee as soon as possible and to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.

- d. A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds referred to in standing order 18(f) is subject to the “light touch” arrangements under Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).
- e. Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £5,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works, the Town Clerk shall seek a minimum of three competitive tenders.
- f. 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 or via e-mail;
  - 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.
  - g. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
  - h. Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.

## **19. Handling Staff Matters**

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by any meeting of Council or delegated to a committee e.g. Finance and General Purposes committee or sub-committee e.g HR Panel is subject to Standing Order 10.
- b The Town Clerks appraisal shall be undertaken annually by the Mayor and Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The Clerk is required for ensuring all staff receive an annual appraisal.
- c Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff (or other members of staff) shall contact the chair of HR Panel in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the HR Panel.
- d Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff

shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.

- e In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records.

## **20. Responsibilities to Provide Information**

- 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.

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**

- 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.
- b These shall normally be processed through the Mayor, Chair of Standing Committees or the Town Clerk.

Any Councillor that speaks to the Press or other Media directly does as an individual and should confirm that their views are personal and not representative of the corporate position of the Council.

## **23. Execution and Sealing of Legal Deeds**

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b Subject to Standing Order 22(a), 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 the Mayor and one other Member of the Council 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. Six Members shall constitute a quorum but a motion to suspend any Standing Orders shall not be moved without notice

unless at least two-thirds of the Members are present.

- 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, in accordance with Standing Order 8.
- 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 chair of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

## **26. Voting on Election to Office**

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor shall be elected in order of seniority to serve a Term of Office of one year, any Councillor who has previously served a full term as the Mayor shall not be placed above any Member who has not been the Mayor. Having completed that Term of Office the retiring Mayor will then be placed on the end of the Seniority List of Members of the Council. If a break in Membership of the Council occurs this will not be added to the terms previously served with the Council but the Member will start from when newly elected.

The Mayor of the Council, unless they resign or becomes disqualified, shall continue in Office and preside at the next Annual Meeting until their successor is elected at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

The Deputy Mayor of the Council, unless they resign or becomes disqualified, shall hold Office until immediately after the election of the Mayor of the Council at the next Annual Meeting of the Council.

In an Election year if the current Mayor of the Council has not been re-elected as a Member of the Council, he or she shall preside at the meeting until the successor Mayor of the Council has been elected. The current Mayor of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Mayor of the Council but

must be given a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

When two or more Councillors are elected to serve on the Council on the same date, by Election, then the order of the Seniority List is determined by the below process.

The name of each Councillor sharing the same Election date to the Council are to be placed in a suitable receptacle and an independent person will pull out a name at a time.

The first name drawn out will take the position of seniority and the process will continue, if necessary, and subsequent names drawn out will, in descending order, complete the Seniority List.

The list, as then established, will remain in place for the ongoing service of each Councillor, regardless of future Elections.

If two or more Councillors are Co-opted to the Council, at the same meeting, then the Councillor that fills the first Co-option will become senior and others, as may then be Co-opted will, in descending order, complete the Seniority List.

The process, if required, will normally take place in February, when the Council determines the Mayor Elect and the Deputy Mayor Elect for the forthcoming year, and will form part of a Council Agenda for both adoption and transparency.

Should a Councillor decline the opportunity to become the Mayor Elect, or the Deputy Mayor Elect then that name will immediately be placed at the end of the Seniority List as if they had served their time in office.

In an Election year, following completion of Term of Office, the outgoing Mayor will be placed at the end of the Seniority List below any newly Elected Councillors.

## **27. Badges of Office**

The distinctive Badges of Office for the Town Council shall be a Gold Chain or Medallion to be worn by the Mayor and a Medallion to be



worn by the Deputy Mayor at their discretion. Maces belong to the Council.

## **28. Order of Business for Council Business**

At all Statutory Meeting of the Council the order of business shall be as follows:

- a Apologies for absence and reasons.
- b Declarations in relation to the code of conduct.
- c To confirm the Minutes of the last Meeting or Meeting of the Council.
- d To answer any question of which at least forty-eight hours' notice has been given; no discussion shall be permitted thereon.
- e An update from the Mayor.
- f Update from Shropshire Council elected Members.
- g To consider the Minutes and Reports of the various Committees of the Council.
- h Seals and formal matters.
- i Any other business specified in the summons.

## **29. Opinion of Counsel**

No opinion of Counsel shall be taken at the expense of the Council, except by order of the Council or Standing Committee or in cases of necessity in consultation with the Mayor and Chair of Finance and General Purposes Committee.

## **30. Grants and Donations**

Grants and donations will be considered (and approved) by the Finance and General Purposes Committee in line with Council policy. Any decision to provide a grant or donation over and above

the budgetary provision within the Free Resource Budget can only be made by full Council.

### **31. General Power of Competence**

To acknowledge that the Council will always seek to apply for the sanction to use the General Power of Competence to enable them to undertake an enhanced role and do things previously restricted under existing legislative powers.

Having made the resolution, this to be clearly written in the minutes. The Council then to revisit that decision and make a new resolution at every “relevant” Annual Meeting of the Council to confirm that it still meets the criteria if appropriate. A “relevant” Annual Meeting is the Annual Meeting of the Council after the next ordinary election has taken place.