

Alderminster Parish Council

Standing Orders

**(Adopted at Council meeting of 20 January 2016 and readopted at
Annual Meeting held on 18 May 2016)**

These regulations will be subject to re-adoption every year at the Annual Meeting (held in May) or as required by legislation/regulation.

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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 **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanks giving or mourning.**
- 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 Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled 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 three minutes.
- f Subject to standing order 1(e) above, each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than three 3 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 at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- 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 A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.


j A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking, except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort. The Chairman may at any time permit an individual to be seated when speaking.


k Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Chairman.




l 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.




  m **A person may not orally report or comment about a meeting as it takes place if he is she is present at the meeting of parish council or its committees but otherwise may:**
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;
c) report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting.


  n **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.**




 o **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.**

 p **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.**




   q **Subject to model standing order 1 (y) below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.**




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The Chairman 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.


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s
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.




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t
The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent.

- u
If prior to a meeting, a Councillor has submitted reasons for his absence at the meeting which is then approved by a resolution, such resolution shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the approval was given.

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v
The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors in respect of the entire meeting.

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w
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 the meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code in his right to participate and vote on that matter.

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x
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 3.

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y
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.

- z
Meetings shall not exceed a period of three 3 hours.

Ordinary Council meetings

- a In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.
- b In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.
- c If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 7.30pm.
- d In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least five other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.
- e (*Wales*) In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, other ordinary meetings may be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council may direct.
- f The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.
- g 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.
- h 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.
- i 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.
- j 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.

- k Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the business of the annual meeting include:
- i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date.**
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council.
 - iii. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, employees and other local authorities.
 - iv. Review of the terms of references for committees.
 - v. Receipt of nominations to existing committees.
 - vi. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities.
 - vii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 15.
 - viii. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations.
 - ix. Review of arrangements, including any charters, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities.
 - x. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back.
 - xi. (*England*) In a year of elections, if a Council's period of eligibility to exercise the general power of competence.
 - xii. Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment.
 - xiii. Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.
 - xiv. Review of the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies.
 - xv. Establishing or reviewing the Council's complaints procedure.
 - xvi. Establishing or reviewing the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
 - xvii. Establishing or reviewing the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media
 - xviii. Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council for the year ahead.

Proper Officer

- a The Council's Proper Officer shall be either (i) the Clerk or such other employee as may be nominated by the Council from time to time or (ii) such other employee appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence. The Proper Officer and the employee appointed to act as such 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. **At least three clear days before a meeting of the council serve on councillors a summons by email, confirming the time, place and the agenda provided any such email contains the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer.**
 - 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 or a sub-committee provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them.**
 - iii. Subject to standing orders 4(a)–(e) below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least seven days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it.
 - iv. **Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office.**
 - v. **Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.**
 - vi. **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
 - vii. Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.
 - viii. Retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
 - ix. Assist with responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in accordance with and subject to the council's policies and 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 executed.
 - 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 a book for such purpose.
- xv. Refer a planning application received by the council to the Chairman, or in his absence the vice-chairman within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the council.
 - xvi. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders.
 - xvii. Retain custody of the seal of the council which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.

Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for and in any event shall relate to the performance of the council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the council's area of its residents.
- b 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 seven clear days before the meeting.
- c 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.
- d 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 five clear days before the meeting.
- e 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.
- f 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.

- g 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 a book, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
- h 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 a book for that purpose, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
- i 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.

Motions at a meeting that do not require 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 require a written report
 - viii. To appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members
 - ix. To extend the time limits for speaking
 - x. To exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest
 - xi. To not hear further from a councillor or member of the public
 - xii. To exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct
 - xiii. To temporarily suspend the meeting
 - xiv. To suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory standing order requirements)
 - xv. To adjourn the meeting
 - xvi. To close a meeting

- b If a motion falls within the terms of reference of a committee or sub-committee or within the delegated powers conferred on an employee, a referral of the same may be made to such committee or sub-committee or employee provided that the Chairman may direct for it to be dealt with at the present meeting for reasons of urgency or expedience.

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 Chairman's direction.
- 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 at the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendments 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 on his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion as 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 substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairman.
- j Subject to standing order (k) below, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chairman.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of the debate on it.
- n If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairman.
- o If an amendment is carried, the original motion, as amended, shall take the place of the

original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

- p The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding threeminutes.
- q Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate of the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote
- r Unless permitted by the Chairman of the meeting, a councillor ay speak once in the debate on a motion except
 - i. To speak on an amendment moved by another councillor
 - ii. To move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke
 - iii. To make a point of order
 - iv. To give a personal explanation; or
 - v. In exercise of right to reply
- s 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.
- t A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman and his decision shall be final.
- u 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.
- t Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the Chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right to reply.

- u Excluding motions moved understanding order (r) above, the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed threeminutes without the consent of the Chairman of the meeting.

Code of conduct (England & Wales)

See also model standing orders 1(d)–(i) above

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

- A. All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- B. Unless she has 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 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 she has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matte 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 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 (d) and (f) above, dispensations 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 (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 portion 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
- Questions
- a A councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council provided seven clear days notice of the question has been given to the Proper Officer.
 - b Questions not related to items of business on the agenda for a meeting shall only be asked during the part of the meeting set aside for such questions.
 - c Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

Draft Minutes

- a The draft minutes shall be served on councillors within 9 days of the meeting taking place. Any amendments shall be sent to the Proper Officer within 5 days of receipt of the draft minutes. A final copy of the draft minutes will be served on the councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are to be approved or 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.
- c Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, 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 Alderminster Parish Council held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the majority of the council 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, any previous draft minutes or recordings of the meeting shall be destroyed.

Disorderly conduct

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the Chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If, in the opinion of the Chairman, there has been a breach of standing order 10(a) above, the Chairman shall express that opinion and thereafter any councillor (including the Chairman) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made in accordance with standing order 10(b) above, is ignored, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or he may adjourn the meeting.

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 two 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 (a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

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.

Expenditure

- a Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- b The Council's financial regulations shall be reviewed once a year.**
- c The Council's financial regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee, sub-committee or to an employee.**

Execution and sealing of legal deeds

See also standing order 5(a)(xvi) above

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

Committees

See also standing order 1 above

- a The Council may, at its annual meeting, appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such 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 or non-councillor members of such a committee (unless the appointment of non-councillors is prohibited by law) 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 six 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 15(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. may in accordance with standing orders, dissolve a committee at any time.

Sub-committees

See also standing order 1 above

- a Unless there is a Council resolution to the contrary, every committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by resolution of the committee.

Extraordinary meetings

See also standing order 1 above

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

Advisory committees

See also standing order 1 above

- a The Council may appoint advisory committees comprised of a number of councillors and non-councillors.
- b Advisory committees and any sub-committees may consist wholly of persons who are non-councillors.

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 the Council's receipts and payments for the each quarter and the balances held at the end of a quarter. This statement should include a comparison with the budget for the financial year. A Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis, 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.

Financial controls and procurement

- a **The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year** at its meeting before the end of January.
- b Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Proper Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than December.
- c Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.

Canvassing of and recommendations by councillors

- a Canvassing councillors or the members of a committee or sub-committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from such an appointment. The Proper Officer shall disclose the requirements of this standing order to every candidate.
- b A councillor or a member of a committee or sub-committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council or recommend a person for such appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such person may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.

- c This standing order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.
- d A councillor may make recommendations in writing concerned with appointments, employment, goods and services to the appropriate working group or council officer.

Inspection of documents

- a Subject to standing orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a councillor may, for the purpose of his official duties, but not otherwise, inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee or a sub-committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its committees or sub-committees shall be available for inspection by councillors.

Unauthorised activities

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

Confidential business

- a Councillors shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware is of a confidential nature.
- b A councillor in breach of the provisions of standing order 24(a) above may be removed from a committee or a sub-committee by a resolution of the Council.
- c 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 public interest.

Power of well-being (England & Wales)

- a **Before exercising the power to promote well-being, a meeting of the full Council shall have passed a resolution to confirm it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria required to qualify as an eligible parish council.**
- b **The Council's period of eligibility begins on the date that the resolution under standing order 25 (a) above was made and expires on the day before the annual meeting of the Council that takes place in a year of ordinary elections.**
- c **After the expiry of its preceding period of eligibility, the Council continues to be an eligible council solely for the purpose of completing any activity undertaken in the exercise of the power to promote well-being which was not completed before the**

expiry of the Council's preceding period of eligibility referred to in standing order 25(b) above.

Matters affecting council employees

- a If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the Council has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to standing order 1(c) above.
- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior employee shall notify the Chairman council or, in his absence, the Vice-Chairman of the council of any absence occasioned by illness or urgency and that person shall report such absence to council at its next meeting.
- c The Chairman of council or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and/or appraisal of the Clerk to the council and shall keep a written record of it. The review and/or appraisal shall be reported back and shall be 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 employeeshall contact the Chairman of the council, or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman of the council 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 the Clerk relates to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman council, 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 Council employees shall keep written records of all meetings relating to their performance, and capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.
- g The Council shall keep written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected.
- h Records documenting reasons for an employee's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for the same.
- i Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to employee records referred to in standing orders 26(g) and (h) above if so justified.

- i Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 26(g) and (h) above shall be provided only to the Clerk and/or the Chairman of the Council.

Requests for information

- a All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- b Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the chairman of the council. The council shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 including exercising the powers of the Proper Officer in respect of Freedom of Information requests set out understanding order 3(b)(x) above.

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.

Communication with District and County or Unitary Councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillor of the District and County or Unitary Council representing its electoral ward.
- b Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter sent to the District or County] shall be sent to the District or County or Unitary Council councillor representing its electoral ward.

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 accounting records and systems of internal control;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the Internal Auditor 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;
 - v. procurement policies (subject to standing order 30(b) below) including the setting of values for different procedures where the contract has an estimated value of less than £25,000.
- b Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in standing order 30(c) below.**
- c Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:
 - i. a public notice of intention to place a contract to be placed in a local newspaper;
 - ii. a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - iii. tenders are to be sent, in a sealed marked envelope, to the Proper Officer by a stated date and time;
 - iv. tenders submitted are to be opened, after the stated closing date and time, by the Proper Officer and at least one member of the Council;
 - v. tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of Council or Committee.
- d Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.
- e Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed £25,000 or other threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 including use of the Contracts Finder Website.**

Allegations of breaches of the code of conduct

- a The subject matter of any notification from the Standards Officer at Stratford District Council that there has been an alleged breach of the code of conduct shall be confidential and, insofar as it is possible to do so by law, the Council including the Proper Officer and the Chairman of the council shall take the steps set out below, together with other steps considered necessary, to maintain confidentiality.
 - i. Draft the summonses and agendas in such a way that the identity and subject matter of the complaint are not disclosed.
 - ii. Ensure that any background papers containing the information set out in standing order 31(a) above are not made public.
 - iii. Ensure that the public and press are excluded from meetings as appropriate.
 - iv. Ensure that the minutes of meetings preserve confidentiality.
 - v. Consider any liaison that may be required with the person or body with statutory responsibility for the investigation of the matter.
- b Standing order 31(d) above should not be taken to prohibit the Council, whether through the Proper Officer or the Chairman of the council, from disclosing information to members and officers of the Council or to other persons where such disclosure is necessary to deal with the complaint or is required by law.
- c The council shall have the power to:
 - i. seek documentary and other evidence from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
 - ii. seek and share information relevant to the complaint;
- g References in standing order 31 to a notification shall be taken to refer to a communication of any kind which relates to a breach or an alleged breach of the code of conduct by a councillor.

Variation, revocation and suspension of standing orders

- a Any or every part of the standing orders, except those that incorporate mandatory statutory requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least two 2 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer.

Standing orders to be given to councillors

- a 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.
- b The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.
- c A councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than 3 times in one meeting may result in him being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.