

ASHINGTON TOWN COUNCIL **STANDING ORDERS & FINANCIAL** **REGULATIONS.**

1. Meetings

- a) Meetings of the Council shall be held in each year on such dates and times and at such a place as the Council may direct.
- b) Smoking is not permitted at any meeting of the Council.

2. The Statutory Annual Meeting

- a) In an election year the Annual Town Council Meeting shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the Councillors are elected to take office and
- b) In a year that is not an election year the Annual Town Council Meeting shall be held on such a day in May as the Council may direct.

3. In addition to the Statutory Annual Town Council Meeting at least three other statutory meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times and at such a place as the Council may direct.

4. Chair of the Meeting

The person presiding at a meeting may exercise all the powers and duties of the Chair in relation to the conduct of the meeting.

5. Proper Officer

Where a statute, regulation or order confers function or duties on the proper officer of the Council in the following cases, he/she shall be the Clerk or nominated officer:-

- a) To receive declarations of acceptance of office.
- b) To receive and record notices disclosing interests at meetings.
- c) To receive and retain plans and documents.
- d) To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council
- e) To receive copies of bye-laws made by another local authority.
- f) To certify copies of bye-laws made by the Council.
- g) To sign and issue the summons to attend meetings of the Council.
- h) To keep proper records for all Council meetings.

6. Quorum of the Council

One-third of the total membership shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the Council.

7. If a quorum is not present or if during a meeting the number of Councillors present (not counting those debarred by reason of a declared interest) falls below the required quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned and business not transacted shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Mayor (Chair) may fix.
8. For a quorum relating to a Committee or Sub-Committee, please refer to standing order 48.

9. Voting

Members of Committees and Sub-Committees entitled to vote, shall vote by a show of hands, or, if at least two members request, by recorded vote where the name of each member will be recorded as voting for or against the motion/proposal or abstaining.

10. **If a minimum of two members so requires, the Clerk shall record the names of the members who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it. Such a request must be made before moving on to the next business.**
11. (i) **Subject to (ii) and (iii) below the Chair may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in any case of an equality of votes may give a casting vote whether or not s/he gave an original vote.**
 - (ii) **If the person presiding at the annual meeting would have ceased to be a member of the Council but for the statutory provisions which preserve the membership of the Chair and Vice-Chair until the end of their term of office s/he may not give an original vote in an election for Chair.**
 - (iii) **The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Chair.**

12. Order of Business

At each Annual Town Council Meeting the first business shall be:-

- a) **To elect a Chair of the Council**
- b) **To receive the Chair's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.**
- c) **In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.**
- d) **To decide when any declarations of acceptance of office which have not been received as provided by law shall be received.**
- e) **To elect a Vice-Chair of the Council.**

- f) If there are Political Groups of Councillors, to appoint a Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, being the Leader and Deputy Leader of the largest Political Group on the Council.
- g) To appoint to Committees and Sub-Committees, Councillors nominated by the Group Leaders in proportion to the number of Councillors in each political group and by the full Council for any added non-Councillor members. The Leader and Deputy-Leader of the Council and the Leader or Deputy Leader of the opposition shall be ex-officio members of Committees and Sub-Committees. The ex-officio members shall be full voting members of those Committees and Sub-Committees.
- h) To appoint representatives to outside bodies.
- i) To consider the payment of any subscriptions falling to be paid annually.
- j) To inspect any deeds and trust investments in the custody of the Council as Required; and
- k) To receive the Annual Report of the Town Council.

And shall thereafter follow the order set out in the Standing Order 15

Ordinary Council Meetings.

- 13. At every meeting other than the Annual Town Council Meeting, the first business shall be to appoint a *Chair* if the *Chair* and *Vice-Chair* be absent and to receive such declarations of acceptance of office (if any) and undertaking to observe the Council's code of conduct as are required by law to be made or, if not then received, to decide when they shall be received.**
- 14. In every year, not later than the meeting at which the financial estimates for next year are settled, the Council shall review the pay and conditions of service of existing employees. Standing Order 38 must be read in conjunction with this requirement.
- 15. After the first business has been completed, the order of business, unless the Council otherwise decides on the ground of urgency, shall be as follows:-
 - a) To allow any member of the public present to make representation, ask questions or present any petitions or any other documentation to the Council.
 - b) To read and consider the Minutes; provided that if a copy has been circulated to each member not later than the day of issue of the summons to attend the meeting, the Minutes may be taken as read.
 - c) After consideration to approve the signature of the Minutes by the person presiding as a correct record.**
 - d) To deal with any matters arising from the minutes.**
 - e) To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.**

- f) To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
- g) To receive such communications as the person presiding may wish to lay before the Council.
- h) To answer questions from Councillors.
- i) To receive and consider reports and minutes of Committees.
- j) To receive and consider motions, resolutions or recommendations in the order in which they have been notified.
- k) To authorise the sealing of documents.
- l) To authorise the signing of orders for payment.

16. Urgent Business

A motion to vary the order of business on the ground of urgency:

- a) May be proposed by the Chair or by any member and, if proposed by the Chair, may be put to the vote without being seconded, and
- b) Shall be put to the vote without discussion.

17. Motions Moved On Notice

Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no motion may be moved unless the business to which it relates has been put on the Agenda by the Clerk or the Mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Clerk at least 5 working days before the next meeting of the Council.

A member can move any motion which relates to the business of the meeting without notice, where such a motion arises out of the discussion of any individual item of business.

- 18.** The Clerk shall date every notice of motion or recommendation when received by him/her, shall number each notice in the order in which it was received and shall enter in a book which shall be opened to the inspection of every member of the Council.
- 19.** The Clerk shall insert in the summons for every meeting all notices of motion or recommendations properly given in the order in which they have been received unless the member giving a notice of motion has confirmed in writing that he/she intends to move it at some later meeting or that he/she withdraws it.
- 20.** If a motion or recommendation specified in the summons is not moved either by the member who gave notice of it or by any other member, it shall, unless postponed by the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

21. If the subject matter of a motion comes within the province of a Committee of the Council, it shall, upon being moved and seconded, stand referred without discussion to such Committee or to such other Committee as the Council may determine for report; provided that the Chair, if he/she considers it to be a matter of urgency, may allow it to be dealt with at the meeting which it was moved.
22. Every motion or recommendation shall be relevant to some subject over which the Council has power or duties which affects its area of competence, except where the Council wishes to identify a position or view on any matter it considers to be appropriate.

23. Motions Moved Without Notice

Motions dealing with the following matters may be moved without notice and must be seconded:-

- a) To appoint a Chair of the meeting.
- b) To correct the Minutes.
- c) To approve the Minutes.
- d) To alter the order of business.
- e) To proceed to the next business.
- f) To close or adjourn the debate.
- g) To refer a matter to a Committee.
- h) To appoint a Committee or any members thereof.
- i) To adopt a report.
- j) To authorise the sealing of documents.
- k) To amend a motion.
- l) To give leave to withdraw a motion or amendment.
- m) To extend the time limit for speeches.
- n) To exclude the press and public. (See Order 68 below)
- o) To silence or eject from the meeting a member named for misconduct. (See Order 33 below)
- p) To give the consent of the Council where such consent is required by these Standing Orders.
- q) To suspend any Standing Order. (See Order 79 below)

- r) To adjourn the meeting.
- s) To deal with any issue arising from a discussion on any matter of business of the meeting.

24. Formal Questions

A member may ask the Chair of the Council or the Clerk any question concerning the business of the Council, provided 3 clear days' notice of the question has been given to the person to whom it is addressed (This clause does not apply to questions that may be asked in the normal course of a discussion or debate)

- 25. No questions not connected with business under discussion shall be asked except during the part of the meeting set aside for questions.
- 26. Every formal question shall be put and answered without discussion.
- 27. A person to whom a formal question is put may decline to answer.

28. Rules of Debate

No discussion shall take place upon the Minutes except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initiated by the Chair.

- 29. a) A motion or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded, and, unless proper notice has already been given, it shall, if required by the Chair, be submitted in writing and handed to him/her before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.
 - b) A member when seconding a motion or amendment may, if s/he then declares their intention to do so, reserve their speech until a later period of the debate.
 - c) A member shall direct their speech to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a question of order.
 - d) No speech by a mover of a motion shall exceed 5 minutes and no other speech shall exceed 3 minutes except by consent of the Council.
 - e) An amendment shall be either:-
 - i) To leave out words.
 - ii) To leave out words and insert/add others.
 - iii) To insert or add words.
 - f) An amendment shall not have the effect of negating the motion before the Council.
 - g) If an amendment be carried, the 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.

- h) A further amendment shall not be moved until the Council has disposed of every amendment previously moved.
- i) The mover of a motion or of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 3 minutes.
- j) A member, other than the mover of a motion, shall not, without leave of the Chair, speak more than once on any motion except to move an amendment or further amendment, or on an amendment, or on a point of order, or in personal explanation, or to move a closure.
- k) A member may speak on a point of order or a personal explanation. A member speaking for these purposes shall be heard forthwith. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by him/her/hers, or any other member, which may have been misunderstood.
- l) A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the consent of the Council, which shall be signified without discussion, and no member may speak upon it after permission has been asked for its withdrawal unless such permission has been refused.
- m) When a motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except the following:-
 - i) To amend the motion.
 - ii) To proceed to the next business.
 - iii) To adjourn the debate.
 - iv) That the question be now put.
 - v) That a member named be not further heard.
 - vi) That a member named do leave the meeting.
 - vii) That the motion be referred to a Committee.
 - viii) To exclude the public and press.
 - ix) To adjourn the meeting.
- 30.** A member shall remain seated when speaking unless requested to stand by the Chair.
- 31.**
 - a) The ruling of the Chair on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation or any other matter pertinent to the running of the meeting, shall not be discussed.
 - b) Members shall address the Chair. If two or more members wish to speak, the Chair shall decide who to call upon.

c) Whenever the Chair speaks during a debate all other members shall be silent.

32. Closure

At the end of a speech any member may, without comment, move “that the question be now put”, “that the debate be now adjourned” or “that the Council do now adjourn”. If such motion is seconded, the Mayor (Chair) shall put the procedural motion but, in the case of a procedural motion “that the question be now put”, only if s/he is of the opinion that the question before the Council has been sufficiently debated. If the procedural motion “that the question be now put” is carried, they shall call upon the mover to exercise or waive their right of reply and shall put the question immediately after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the Council shall not prejudice the mover’s right of reply at the resumption.

33. Disorderly Conduct

- a) **All members must observe the Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 3 July 2012, a copy of which is annexed to these Standing Orders.**
- b) No member shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Mayor (Chair), willfully obstruct business, or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly **or in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.**
- c) If, in the opinion of the Chair, a member has broken the provisions of paragraph (b) of this Order the Chair shall express that opinion to the Council and thereafter the Chair (without the requirement of a seconder) or any member may move that the member named be no longer heard or that the member named do leave the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion. **If a member reasonably believes another member is in breach of the code of conduct, that member is under a duty to report the breach to the Standards Board.**
- d) If either of the motions mentioned in paragraph (c) is disobeyed, the Chair may adjourn the meeting or take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce them.

34. Right of Reply

The mover of a motion shall have a right to reply immediately before the motion is put to the vote. If an amendment is proposed the mover of the amendment shall be entitled to reply immediately before the amendment is put to the vote. A member exercising a right of reply shall not introduce a new matter. After the right of reply has been exercised or waived, a vote shall be taken without further discussion.

35. Alteration of Motion

A member may, with the consent of his/her seconder, move amendments to his/her Own motion

36. Rescission of Previous Resolution

- a) A decision (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special resolution, the written notice whereof bears the name of at least 7 members of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a Committee.
- b) When a special resolution or any other resolution has been resolved under the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Order, no similar motion may be moved within six months.

37. Voting On Appointments

Where more than two persons have been nominated for any position to be filled by The Council and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority in favour of one Person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off The list and a fresh vote taken, and so on until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.

38. Discussions and Motions/Resolutions Affecting Employees of the Council

If at a meeting there arises any questions to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service, of any person employed by the Council, it shall not be considered until (i) the Council or Committee (as the case may be) has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded. (See Standing Order No. 68) and (ii) the Council/Committee has decided whether the employee (where appropriate) be asked to leave the meeting.

39. Motions on Expenditure

Any motion ([which is moved otherwise than in pursuance of a recommendation of the Finance Committee or of another Committee after recommendation by the Finance Committee] and which, if carried, would in the opinion of the Chair substantially increase the expenditure upon any service which is under the management of the Council or reduce the revenue at the disposal of any Committee, or which would involve capital expenditure, shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, and any Committee affected by it shall consider whether it desires to report thereon (and the Finance Committee shall report on the financial aspect/implications of the matters).

40. Expenditure

Orders for the payment of money shall be authorised by resolution of the Council and signed by two members.

41. Sealing of Documents

Any two members of the Council named in a resolution approved under the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Order may seal, on behalf of the Council, any document required by law to be issued under seal.

42. Committees and Sub-Committees

The Council may at its Annual Meeting appoint standing Committees and may at any other time appoint such other Committees/working groups as are necessary, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf:-

- a) Shall not appoint any member of a Committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting.
- b) May appoint/co-opt persons other than members of the Council to any Committee (such persons shall not have the right to vote); and
- c) In exceptional circumstances may appoint/co-opt persons other than members of the Committee to any Sub-Committee (such persons shall be entitled to vote); and
- d) May, subject to the provisions of Order 36 above at any time dissolve or alter the membership of Committees.

43. The Leader and Deputy-Leader of the Council and the Leader or Deputy Leader of the opposition shall be ex-officio members of Committees and Sub-Committees, shall be voting members of every Committee and shall count towards the Committee quorum.

44. Every Committee shall at its first meeting before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chair and may elect a Vice-Chair who shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Council, and shall arrange its programme of meetings for the year.

45. Special Meeting

The Chair of a Committee or the Chair of the Council may summon an additional meeting of that Committee at any time. An additional meeting shall also be summoned with a written request in writing of not less than a quarter of the members of the Committee/Council. The summons shall set out the business to be considered at the additional meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.

46. Sub-Committees

Every Committee may appoint Sub-Committees for purposes to be specified by the Committee.

47. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee shall be members of every sub-Committee appointed by it unless they signify that they do not wish to serve.

48. Except where determined by the Council in the case of a Committee, or by the Council or by the appropriate Committee in the case of a Sub-Committee, the quorum of a Committee or Sub-Committee shall be one-third (rounded up) of its members (including ex-officio members).

49. The Standing Orders on rules of debate (except those parts relating to standing and to speaking more than once) and the Standing Order on interests of members in contracts and other matters shall apply to Committee and Sub-Committee

meetings.

50. Advisory Committees

- 1) The Council may create advisory Committee, whose name, and number of members and the bodies to be invited to nominate members shall be specified.
- 2) The Clerk shall inform the members of each advisory Committee of the terms of reference of the Committee.
- 3) An advisory Committee may make recommendations and give notice thereof to the Council.
- 4) An advisory Committee may consist wholly of persons who are not members of the Council.

Voting in Council Meetings or Committees

51. Members of Committees and Sub-Committees entitled to vote, shall vote by a show of hands, or, if at least two members request, by recorded vote where the name of each member will be recorded as voting for or against the motion/proposal or abstaining.

52. **Chairs of Committees and Sub-Committees shall in the case of an equality of votes have a second or casting vote.**

53. Presence of Non-Members of Committees at Committee Meetings

A member who has proposed a motion which has been referred to any Committee of which s/he is not a member, may explain his/her motion to the Committee but shall not vote.

54. Accounts and Financial Statement

- a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this Standing Order or by statute, all accounts for payments and claims upon the Council shall be laid before the Council.
- b) Where it is necessary to make a payment before it has been authorised by the Council, such payment shall be certified as to its correctness and urgency by the appropriate officer. Such payments shall be authorised by the Committee, if any, having charge of the business to which it relates, or by the proper officer for payment with approval of the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Council.
- c) All payments ratified under sub-paragraph (b) of this Standing Order shall be separately included in the next schedule of payments before the Council.

55. The Town Clerk shall supply to each member as soon as practicable after 31 March in each year a statement of the receipts and payments of the Council for the completed financial year. A Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March shall be presented as soon after as is practicable. The Statement of Accounts of the Council (which is subject to external audit) shall be presented to Council for formal approval before the end of the following month of September.

56. Estimates / Precepts

1. The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of January.
2. Any Committee desiring to incur expenditure for the forthcoming year shall give the Clerk a written estimate of the expenditure recommended no later than the end of December.

57. Interests

If a member has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 3 July 2012, disclosing the existence and nature of that interest as required.

- 58. If a member who has declared a personal interest then considers the interest to be prejudicial, s/he must withdraw from the room or chamber during consideration of the item to which the interest relates.**

- 59. The Clerk shall be required to compile and hold a Register of Member's Interests, or a copy thereof, in accordance with agreement reached with the Monitoring Officer of the Responsible Authority and/or as required by statute.**

- 60.** If a candidate for any appointment under the Council is to their knowledge related to any member of or the holder of any office under the Council, s/he and the person to whom s/he is related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Clerk. A candidate who fails so to do shall be disqualified for such appointment, and, if appointed, may be dismissed without notice. The Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate Committee any such disclosure. Where a relationship to a member is disclosed, Standing Orders 57 and 58 shall apply.

- 61.** The Clerk shall make known the purpose of Standing Order 60 to every candidate.

62. Canvassing of and Recommendations by Members

- i) Canvassing of members of the Council or of any Committee, directly or indirectly, for any appointment under the Council shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Clerk shall make known the purpose of this sub-paragraph of this Standing Order to every candidate.
- ii) A member of the Council or of any Committee shall not solicit for any person any appointment under the Council or recommend any person for such appointment or for promotion; but nevertheless, any such member may give a written testimonial/reference of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.

- 63.** Standing Order Nos. 60 & 62 shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

64. Inspection of Documents

A member may for the purpose of his duty as such (but not otherwise), inspect any document in possession of the Council or a Committee, and if copies are available shall, on request, be supplied for the like purpose with a copy.

65. All minutes kept by the Council and by any Committee shall be open for the inspection of any member of the Council and by any member of the public provided reasonable notice has been given for such access.

66. Unauthorised Activities

No member of the Council or of any Committee shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council:

- a) Inspect any lands or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
- b) Issue orders instructions or directions unless authorised to do so by the Council or the relevant Committee or Sub-Committee.

67. Admission of The Public and Press to Meetings

The public and the media shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its Committees and Sub-Committees, which may, however, temporarily exclude the public and press by means of the following resolutions:-

“That in view of the [special] [confidential] nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw”

68. The Council Committee or Sub-Committee shall state the confidential reason for exclusion.

69. At all meetings of the Council, the Chair may at his/her discretion and at a convenient time in the transaction of business, adjourn the meeting so as to allow any members of the public to address the meetings in relation to the business to be transacted at that meeting.

70. The Clerk shall afford to the press reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present. There shall be no audio or video recording or photographs of the meeting without the express approval of the Council.

71. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chair may, after warning, order that they be removed from the meeting and may adjourn the meeting for such period as is necessary to restore order.

72. Confidential Business

- i) No member of the Council or of any Committee or Sub-Committee shall disclose to any person not a member, or the Clerk of the Council, any business declared to be confidential by the Council, the Committee or the Sub-Committee as the case may be.
- ii) Any member in breach of the provisions of paragraph (i) of this Standing Order shall be removed from any Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council by the Council.

73. Liaison with County Councillors

A summons and Agenda for each meeting shall be sent, together with an invitation to attend, to the Unitary Councillor for the appropriate division or ward.

74. Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter ordered to be sent to the County Council shall be transmitted to the Unitary Councillor for the division as required.

75. Planning Applications

- i) The Clerk shall, as soon as it is received, shall record the following particulars of every planning application notified to the Council:
 - a) The date on which it was received
 - b) The name of the applicant
 - c) The place to which it relates.
- ii) The Clerk shall refer every planning application received to the Chair of the Planning Committee, or in the Chair's absence to the Vice-Chair within 48 hours of receipt.

76. Attendance at Council Meetings

If a member fails throughout six consecutive months to attend any meetings of the Council or any of its Committees or Sub-Committees of which he/she is a member, or of a joint Committee, joint board or other body to which any of the Council's powers have been transferred or delegated, he/she ceases automatically to be a member of the Council unless, either he/she has a "statutory excuse" or his/her failure is due to a reason approved by the Council or, he/she has attended as an appointed representative of the Council at a meeting of any outsider body. The period begins with the last meeting attended.

77. STANDING ORDER ON FINANCIAL MATTERS

- a. The Council shall ensure its financial management is adequate and comprehensive and facilitates the effective exercise of the Council functions, its risk management and the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption.
- b. The Clerk of the Council is the Responsible Financial Officer [RFO] and the RFO shall administer the Councils financial affairs in accordance with proper accounting practices and under the direction of the Council.

- c. The RFO will determine on behalf of the Council its accounting records and control systems and shall ensure they are observed, maintained and kept up to date. All accounting procedures and financial records shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations which means the Regulations issued under the provisions of section 27 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 or as amended.
- d. The RFO will provide the Council with a Budget breakdown and any other financial reports as often as the Council may determine not less than usually four times per annum.
- e. CONTRACTS
 - i. Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £20,000 but not exceeding £50,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works, the Clerk shall endeavour to invite tenders from at least three local firms.
 - ii. Where the value of the intended contract exceeds £50,000 the Clerk shall give at least three weeks public notice of such intention in the same manner as public notice of meetings of the Council is given and also in such newspapers circulating in the district as the Council shall direct.
 - iii. Any notice of a contract exceeding £20,000 shall state the general nature of the intended contract and state the name and address of the person to whom tenders are to be addressed and the last date by which those tenders should reach that person in the ordinary course of post.
 - iv. Tenders shall be opened by the Clerk or other person to whom tenders are required to be addressed on the date specified pursuant to paragraph (e) iii of this Order and shall be reported by the person who opened them to the Council or, where the tenders have been sought by a Committee or Sub-Committee to that Committee or Sub-Committee.
 - v. Neither the Council nor any Committee, or Sub-Committee is bound to accept the lowest tender.
 - vi. If no tenders are received or if all the tenders are identical the Council may make such arrangements for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works as it thinks fit.
 - vii. A notice issued under this standing order shall contain a statement of the effect of Standing Orders Nos. 60, 61 and 62.
 - viii. Where the Council is to enter into a contract less than £20,000 and more than £5,000 for the supply of goods and materials or for the execution of works or specialist services the Clerk shall endeavour to obtain three quotations from local firms.
 - ix. Where the Council is to enter into a contract less than £5,000 the Clerk shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction usually by obtaining three quotations or estimates.
 - x. The Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is delegated to him/her or which is necessary to carry out any repair,

replacement or other work which is of such urgency that it must be done at once and whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £1,000 and the Clerk shall report to the Council as soon as practical thereafter.

78. CODE OF CONDUCT ON COMPLAINTS

The Council shall deal with complaints of maladministration allegedly committed by the Council or by any officer or member in the manner recommended in Circular 2/86 issued by the National Association of Local Councils. This [currently] states:-

- a. If a complaint about procedures or administration is notified orally to a Councillor or the Clerk and they cannot satisfy the complainant fully forthwith the complainant shall be asked to put the complaint in writing to the Clerk and be assured that it will be dealt with promptly after receipt.
- b. If a complainant prefers not to put the complaint to the Clerk he/she shall be advised to put it to the Chairman.
- c. On receipt of a written complaint the Clerk or the Chairman as the case may be shall try to settle the complaint directly with the complainant but shall not do so in respect of a complaint about a Councillor or the Clerk without first notifying the person complained of and giving an opportunity for comment on the manner in which it is intended to attempt to settle the complaint.
- d. Where the Clerk or the Chairmen receives a written complaint about his own actions the complaint shall be forthwith referred to the Council.
- e. The Clerk or the Chairman shall report to the next meeting of the Council any written complaint disposed of by direct action with the complainant.
- f. The Clerk or the Chairman shall bring any written complaint which has not been settled to the next meeting of the Council and the Clerk shall notify the complainant of the date on which the complaint will be considered and the complainant shall be offered the opportunity to explain the complaint orally.
- g. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances attending any complaint warrant the matter being discussed in the absence of the public but any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
- h. As soon as maybe after the decision has been made it and the nature of any action to be taken shall be communicated in writing to the complainant.
- i. The Council shall defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary from the Association of Local Councils. The complaint shall be dealt with at the next meeting after the advice has been received.

79. Variation, Revocation and Suspension of Standing Orders

Any or every part of the Standing Orders except those printed in **bold type** may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

- 80.** A resolution permanently to add, vary or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

81. Standing Orders to be Given to Members

A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each member by the Clerk upon delivery to him/her/her of the member's declaration of acceptance of office and written undertaking to observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.