

# Tidbury Green Approved Standing Orders

## April 2017

### 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 chairman of the meeting.
- b Only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- c 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.

### 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 chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) above is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

### 3. Meetings generally

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

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice**
- ■ d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- e Parishioners may address the Parish Council on a relevant matter, for a maximum of 3 minutes, during the "Open Forum" Agenda item.
- f Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- ■ g **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.**
- h **Anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council.**
- i **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.**

## Updated NALC Model Standing Orders 2013 (Jan 2015)

-    j **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors or councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
-    k **The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**  
*See standing orders 5(i) and (j) below for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the council.*
- l **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 his vote for or against that question.**
- m The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
- i. the time and place of the meeting;
  - ii. the names of councillors present and absent;
  - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
  - iv. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
  - v. if there was a public participation session; and
  - vi. the resolutions made.
-    n **A councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.**
-  o **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.**
-    p **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.**

## Updated NALC Model Standing Orders 2013 (Jan 2015)



- q The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (“the 2014 Regulations”) provides that **a person may** not orally report or comment about a meeting as it takes place if he is present at the meeting of a parish council or its committees but otherwise may:
- a) **film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting;**
  - b) **use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later;**
  - c) **report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting.**

### 4. Committees and sub-committees

- a **Unless the council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the council.**
- c **Unless the council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary.

### 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 new councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a council shall be held on such day in May as the council may direct.**
- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d **In addition to the annual meeting of the council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the council directs.**
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.**

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- f** The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the council.
- g** The Vice-Chairman of the Council, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the council.
- h** In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the council, he shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- i** In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the council, he shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- j** Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the council, the business of the annual meeting shall 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;

## **6. Extraordinary meetings of the council and committees and sub-committees**

- a** The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council at any time.
- b** If the Chairman of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the council within 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 must be signed by the two councillors.

## 7. 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 chairman of the meeting.

## 8. Handling confidential or sensitive information

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

## 9. Draft minutes

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy.
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.

Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

## 10. 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 he 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.

## Updated NALC Model Standing Orders 2013 (Jan 2015)

- c Unless he has been granted a dispensation, the Councillor or non-councillor with voting rights, shall not be included in any email correspondence regarding the matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary 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 full Council at the meeting of the council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
  - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
  - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
  - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
  - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 10(e) above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:**
  - i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business or**
  - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area or**
  - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

## 11. Code of conduct complaints

- a Upon notification by Solihull Metropolitan Borough 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 8 above, report this to the council.

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- b Where the notification in standing order 11(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 11(d) below.
- c The council may:
  - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
  - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- d **Upon notification by the District or 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 him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

## 12. Proper Officer

- a The Proper Officer shall:
  - i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council or a committee 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, place and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the council or a meeting of a committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the council convened by councillors is signed by them);**
  - iii. **convene a meeting of full council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
  - iv. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
  - v. Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.
  - vi. Where there are time constraints and the council cannot meet and a decision needs to be arrived at, then the Proper Officer can request Councillors views via email. Councillors must submit their opinion to the Proper Officer (via email or in writing) A decision / course of action can be reached where a majority of Councillors respond with an agreed approach. For reaching decisions in relation to Planning Applications a majority of 3 must be achieved to submit a response. For other matters where a decision needs to be made urgently, if any Councillor is unavailable due to circumstances such as holidays etc, the Clerk can accept a majority reached based on the number of Councillors who are available.

### 13. Financial controls and procurement

- a. **Financial regulations shall confirm that a proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of [£3,000] shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender.**
- b. **Where the council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) which is valued at £25,000 or more, the council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations<sup>1</sup>.**
- c. **The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time)<sup>2</sup>.**
- d. **When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation to the council.**
- e. **Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.**
- f. **All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of council.**

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<sup>1</sup> The Regulations require councils to use the Contracts Finder website to advertise contract opportunities, set out the procedures to be followed in awarding new contracts and to publicise the award of new contracts

<sup>2</sup> Thresholds currently applicable are:

- a. For public supply and public service contracts 209,000 Euros (£164,176)
- b. For public works contracts 5,225,000 Euros (£4,104,394)

## 14. 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 Any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

## 15. Restrictions on councillor activities

- a. Unless authorised by a resolution, 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.

## 16. The Parish Council Website

Policy agreement regarding the management of the Tidbury Green Parish Council Website "The Website":

- a. The Parish Clerk is the only person authorised by the Council to administer The Website, or to put new information on, or remove information from, The Website.**
- b. The Parish Clerk will require the authority of three Parish Councillors in writing, or by a majority of votes at a Parish Council Meeting, in order to put new information on, or remove information from The Website.**
- c. In addition, the Parish Clerk is given the authority to add or remove information in order for the Parish Council to meet its statutory obligations**
- d. The Parish Clerk may allow access to authorised advisors to maintain The Website.**
- e. The Parish Council will appoint a Deputy to the Clerk, solely for the following purpose:**
  - If the Parish Clerk is indisposed and is temporarily unable to fulfil the maintenance of The Website, the Deputy may be authorised by a majority of the Council to take on the administration duties of the Clerk, set out in 1) above, subject to the conditions set out in 2) to 4) above.**
- f. The authorisations set out above will be regarded as the only proper means for additions or deletions to be made of Website information. Any intrusion outside of these authorisations will be regarded as a criminal hack, and will be reported as such.**