



THAME
Town Council

Standing Orders

May 2017

Note: Those Standing Orders in **Bold Type** may not be suspended (see Standing Order 34).

1. Meetings

1.0 Meetings of the Council shall be decided by Council on the published Schedule of Meetings.

1.1 Meetings shall be held in the Upper Chamber at the Town Hall, Thame, at 6.30pm unless following a previous meeting, when an estimate of start time will be published on the agenda, and the meeting will not start before that time.

1.2 In an election year the Annual Council Meeting shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the Members elected take office.

1.3 In a year that is not an election year the Annual Council Meeting shall be held on the second Tuesday in May as the Council.

1.4 In addition to the statutory Annual Council Meeting at least three other statutory meetings shall be held in each year.

2. Chairman of the Meeting

2.0 The person presiding at all meetings may exercise all the powers and duties of the Chairman in relation to the conduct of the meeting.

3. Proper Officer

3.0 Where a statute, regulation or order confers functions or duties on the Proper Officer of the Council in the following cases, they shall be the Town Clerk or other employee nominated by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence. The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following: -

- a) Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office.
- b) Retain a copy of every Member's register of interest and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
- c) Retain a copy of every Member's Dispositions and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
- d) Manage the organisation, storage of and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form.
- e) Sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council.
- f) Receive copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.
- g) Retain custody of the seal of the Council which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
- h) Sign and serve on Members a summons to attend meetings of the Council by delivery, post or electronic means confirming the date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council or a Committee at least 3 clear days before the meeting not including Sunday or Public Holidays.

- i) Give public notice of the date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before the meeting of the Council or a Committee not including Sunday or Public Holidays.
- j) Keep proper records required before and after Council meetings.
- k) Process all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the Council's procedures relating to such matters.
- l) Act on or take on responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in Standing Orders.

4. Quorum

4.0 *One-third of the total Membership shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the Council. A motion to suspend Standing Orders shall not be moved without notice unless at least two-thirds of the Members are present.*

4.1 If a quorum is not present within ten minutes of the start time of a meeting or if during a meeting the number of Members 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 Chairman may decide.

5. Length of Meetings

5.0 Except at the discretion of the Chairman, all meetings of the Council shall finish not later than two hours after commencement. Any business not transacted shall be carried over to the next meeting or such other date as the Chairman may decide.

6. Voting

6.0 Members shall vote by show of hands. The election of a Mayor and Deputy Mayor however, may be a secret ballot if requested by a Member.

6.1 *If two Members so require before the vote is taken, the Town 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 record shall also show Members present but abstaining from voting.*

6.2 *Subject to 6.3 and 6.4 below, the Mayor 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 even if they gave no original vote.*

6.3 *If the person presiding at the Annual Council Meeting would have ceased to be a Member of the Council but for the statutory provisions which preserve the Membership of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor until the end of their term of office, they may not give an original vote in an election for Mayor.*

6.4 *The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Mayor.*

6.5 Any Member may request immediately after a vote has been taken that the minutes record the way their vote was cast.

7. Order of Business

7.0 At the Annual Council Meeting the first business shall be:

- a) **To elect a Mayor** who normally must have served continuously on the Council for two years.
- b) To receive the Mayor's declaration of acceptance of office**
- c) To elect a Deputy Mayor
- d) To receive the Deputy Mayor's declaration of acceptance of office**
- e) To receive apologies of absence.
- f) To receive any Declarations of Interest and to consider any dispensation requests.
- g) To decide when any declarations of acceptance of office which have not been received as provided by law shall be received**
- h) To review the committee structure, terms of reference and delegation
- i) To appoint committees
- j) To appoint representatives to external organisations
- k) To review and adopt appropriate Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

7.1 **At every meeting other than the Annual Council Meeting the first business shall be to appoint a person to preside if the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are absent or have not arrived within 10 minutes of the pre-determined start time.**

7.2 After the first business of the Annual Council Meeting has been completed and for all other meetings, the order of business, unless the Council otherwise decides on the ground of urgency, shall be as follows:

- a) **To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done before any other business.**
- b) To receive the Mayor's report and any such communications as the Mayor may wish to lay before the Council.
- c) To receive reports from the County and District Councillors.
- d) To consider motions in the order in which they have been notified.
- e) To answer questions pursuant to Standing Order 11.
- f) To approve and adopt the minutes as a correct record in accordance with Standing Order 12.
- g) To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.

- h) To receive and consider reports and minutes including delegated decisions made under Standing Order 21. Questions to the Chairman may be raised and answered but no debate is permitted.
- i) To consider any other matters specified in the summons.
- j) To consider confidential and exempt matters.

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

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

7.4 Election of Mayor Designate

- a) In a non-election year, at the Council meeting immediately prior to the Annual Council Meeting, the Mayor designate shall be appointed for the forthcoming year.

8. Public Participation

8.0 Subject to 8.1 below, members of the public shall be allowed to address the Council on a matter before the Council on the following conditions.

- a) That they make their intention known to the Town Clerk by 5pm on the working day prior to the day of the meeting.
- b) That where a number of people wish to make similar representations they are prepared to select one person from amongst their number to speak for them all.
- c) That where different people wish to speak on each side of an issue then each side may appoint one member to represent their views.
- d) That no member of the public may speak for more than five minutes and that total public participation lasts for no longer than twenty minutes.
- e) A record of the public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- f) Public participation on a particular item of business can be executed at the start of that item of business.

8.1 The procedure for dealing with a public participation request shall be as follows:

- a) The Town Clerk shall inform the Chairman prior to the meeting that such a request has been received and the Chairman will decide whether or not to accept the request. If the Chairman does not accept the request the first item of business shall be to move that the request be rejected and the Council shall decide, according to Standing Order 13.0. whether or not to agree the motion.
- b) The Chairman shall at the agreed time in the agenda allow any members of the public to address the meeting in relation to business on the agenda. Such sessions will form part of the Council meeting in law and shall be duly minuted. Where, however, Members of the Council exercise their rights pursuant to 8.1 c) Members of the public shall be allowed to

attend the meeting to make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the business to be transacted.

- c) At all meetings of the Council, the Chairman may permit Members of the Council who have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in relation to any item of business on the agenda to make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to the business. Members shall withdraw from the Council Table immediately after making their contribution. Such sessions form part of the Council meeting in law and shall be duly minuted.
- d) The Chairman may move the order of business be altered to take the matter on which the public has made representations immediately after the minutes of the meeting have been approved, or in such other place as seems appropriate.

8.2 Members of the public who live, work or run a business in the parish shall also have the right to ask questions of the Town Clerk or Chairman on any matter, on the following conditions:

- a) That they make their intention known to the Town Clerk by 4pm on the working day prior to the day of the meeting, by providing a copy of the question to be asked in writing.
- b) Questions shall be asked during the part of the meeting set aside for public participation.
- c) The questioner can read out their own question, or they can ask the Town Clerk to read the question.
- d) One supplementary question may be put if it is relevant to the answer to the original question.
- e) Every question / supplementary question shall be put and answered without discussion and no debate shall be allowed.
- f) A person to whom a question / supplementary question has been put may decline to answer.
- g) A written reply will be given where a reply cannot conveniently be given orally. That written reply will be included in the minutes.
- h) Total public participation lasts for no longer than twenty minutes. Questions not answered within that period will receive a written reply.
- i) If any person(s) submit(s) more than one question at any meeting it will be subject to the discretion of the Chairman as to the order in which the questions are asked, so as to be fair to other questioners, given the time limits defined.
- j) If a person who has submitted a question is not present when the question is called, the person will receive a written reply. In addition, the question and a copy of the answer will be circulated to all Members, but not necessarily included in the minutes.

9. Notices of Motion

9.0 Except as provided by Standing Order 10, no notice of motion may be moved unless the mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Town Clerk at least five working days before the next meeting of the Council excluding the day of submission and the day of the meeting.

- 9.1** The Town Clerk shall date every notice of motion when received, shall number each notice in the order in which it was received and keep a record of such which shall be open to the inspection of every Member of the Council.
- 9.2** The Town Clerk shall insert in the summons for every meeting all notices of motion given in the order in which they have been received unless the Member giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that he/she intends to move at some later meeting or that he/she withdraws it.
- 9.3** ***A motion when notice is given shall be proposed as written and seconded before it is debated.***
- 9.4** If a motion specified in the summons is not be moved either by the Member giving it or some other Member on their behalf, it shall, unless postponed by the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.
- 9.5** If the subject matter of a notice of motion comes within the competence 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 Chairman, if he/she considers it to be a matter of urgency, may allow it to be dealt with at the meeting at which it was moved.
- 9.6** Every notice of motion shall be relevant to some subject over which the Council has power or duties, which affects its area.
- 9.7** A Motion to add or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's Standing Orders, not mandatory by law, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice must be signed by at least 5 Members.

10. Motions That May Be Proposed Without Notice

10.0 Motions dealing with the following matters may be proposed without notice:

- a) To appoint a Chairman of the meeting.
- b) To correct the Minutes on a matter of accuracy.
- c) To approve the Minutes.
- d) To consider a newly raised dispensation request.
- e) To alter the order of business.
- f) To proceed to the next business.
- g) To close or adjourn the debate.
- h) To adjourn the meeting.
- i) To refer a matter to a Committee.
- j) To appoint a Committee or any Members thereof.
- k) To appoint a Working Group or any Members thereof.

- l) To adopt a report.
- m) To authorise the sealing of documents as pursuant to Standing Order 20.
- n) To amend a motion.
- o) To give leave to withdraw a motion or an amendment.
- p) To extend the time limit for speeches.
- q) To exclude the press and public under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act, 1960.
- r) To silence or eject from the meeting a Member named for misconduct under Standing Order 16.
- s) To give the consent of the Council where such consent is required by these Standing Orders.
- t) To suspend any Standing Order (pursuant to Standing Order 34) to allow an open discussion outside the normal rules of debate.

11. Member's Questions

- 11.0** A Member may ask the Mayor of the Council any questions concerning the business of the Council. Any such questions shall be put when the item "Member's Questions" on the Agenda is reached.
- 11.1** A Member may ask the Chairman of a Committee any question upon the minutes or report of the Committee then before the Council if the question is put before the Council's consideration of those procedures is finished.
- 11.2** Every question shall be put and answered without discussion and no debate shall be allowed.
- 11.3** Where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, it shall be deemed a sufficient reply if given in writing and circulated to Members with the minutes of the meeting at which the question was asked.

12. Minutes

- 12.0** The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the Council be approved as a correct record and seek a seconder.
- 12.1** The Chairman shall go through the minutes to allow Members to raise any points of accuracy.
- 12.2** No motion or discussion shall take place upon the minutes except upon their accuracy.
- 12.3** ***The Chairman shall initial each page and sign the last page of the minutes.***
- 12.4** The Chairman shall then go through the minutes page by page to allow Members to ask any question as to the progress of any item.

13. Rules of Debate

- 13.0** A motion or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded, and, unless proper notice has already been given under Standing Order 9. It shall, if required by the Chairman, be put in writing and handed to the Chairman before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.
- 13.1** A Member when seconding a motion or amendment may, if he/she then declares their intention to do so, reserve their speech until a later period of the debate.
- 13.2** A Member shall direct his/her speech to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a question of order.
- 13.3** No speech shall exceed 5 minutes except by consent of the Council.
- 13.4** An amendment shall be relevant to the motion and shall be either:-
- a) To leave out words
 - b) To leave out words and insert others
 - c) To insert or add words.
- 13.5** But such omission, insertion or addition of words shall not have the effect of introducing a substantially new proposal into, or of negating the motion before the Council.
- 13.6** A Member may, with the consent of his/her seconder, move amendments to his/her own motion.
- 13.7** If an amendment be carried, the motion, as amended, shall take the place of the original resolution and shall become the resolution upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- 13.8** Only one amendment may be proposed and discussed at a time and no further amendments shall be proposed until the amendment under discussion has been disposed of. Providing that the Chairman may permit two or more amendments to be discussed (but not voted on) together if circumstances suggest that this course would facilitate the proper conduct of Council business.
- 13.9** The mover of a motion or of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 3 minutes and shall have the right of reply immediately before a vote is taken.
- 13.10** A Member, other than the mover of a resolution, shall not, without leave of the Council, 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.
- 13.11** A Member may speak on a point of order or a personal explanation.
- 13.12** 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.
- 13.13** When a motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except the following:
- a) To consider a newly raised dispensation request
 - b) To amend the motion

- c) To proceed to the next business
- d) To adjourn the debate
- e) That the question be now put
- f) To refer a subject of debate to a Committee for consideration or reconsideration
- g) That a Member named be not further heard
- h) That a Member named leave the meeting
- i) That the motion be referred to a Committee
- j) To exclude the public and press
- k) To adjourn the meeting.

13.14 A Member must raise their hand when wishing to speak and will only do so when given permission by the Mayor.

13.15 A Member shall address the Mayor when speaking.

13.16 If two or more Members raise their hands to speak, the Mayor shall decide whom to call upon and the other will remain silent.

13.17 Whenever the Mayor speaks during a debate all other Members shall be silent.

13.18 When a Member is speaking other Members will be silent unless rising on a point of order or a personal explanation.

14. Closure of Motions

14.0 At the end of any speech a Member may, without comment, move “that the question be now put”, “that the debate be now adjourned”, “the Council proceed to the next business” or “that the Council do now adjourn”.

14.1 If such a motion is seconded, the Chairman shall put the motion but, in the case of a motion “that the question be now put”, only if he/she is of the opinion that the question before the Council has been sufficiently debated.

14.2 If the motion “that the question be now put” is carried, he/she shall call upon the mover to exercise or waive his/her 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.

14.3 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.

14.4 If any motion proposed under Standing Order 10, would, in the opinion of the Chairman, if carried, substantially increase the expenditure upon any service which is under the management of, or reduce the revenue at the disposal of, any Committee, or would include Capital

expenditure, it shall, when proposed and seconded stand adjourned without discussion, until such time as any Committee affected by it has reported on the matter.

15. Point of Order and Personal Explanation

- 15.0** A Member may rise on a point of order or in personal explanation, and shall be entitled to be heard without delay.
- 15.1** A point of order shall relate only to the alleged breach of a Standing Order or statutory provision and the Member shall specify the Standing Order or the statutory provision and the way in which he/she considers it has been broken.
- 15.2** A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by him or her, which may appear to have been misunderstood in the present debate.
- 15.3** The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.

16. Disorderly Conduct

- 16.0** *All Members shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.*
- 16.1** No Member shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman, wilfully obstruct business or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly or in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.
- 16.2** If, in the opinion of the Chairman, a Member has acted in a manner contrary to 16.1, the Chairman shall express that opinion to the Council and thereafter any Member may move that the Member named be no longer heard or that the Member named leaves the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.
- 16.3** If either of the Standing Orders 16.1 and 16.2 are disobeyed, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting or take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce them.

17. Decisions and Reversal of Previous Resolution

- 17.0** All actions which are to be decided by Council will be proposed and seconded.
- 17.1** A decision (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the signature of at least five Members of the Council, or by a resolution moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a Committee.
- 17.2** When a special resolution or any other resolution proposed under 17.1 has been disposed of, no similar resolution may be moved within a further six months.

18. Voting on Appointments

- 18.0** 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. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

20. Sealing of Documents

- 20.0** A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution of the Council.
- 20.1** *In accordance with a resolution under para 20.0, the Council's Common Seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two Members of the Council who shall sign the deed as witnesses.*

21. Standing Committees

- 21.0** The Council may at its Annual Council Meeting appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as are necessary and:
- a) Shall determine the terms of reference for each Committee.
 - b) Shall not appoint any member of a Committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Council Meeting.
 - c) May appoint persons other than Members of the Council to any advisory committee.
 - d) May at any time dissolve a committee or alter its Membership.
- 21.1** The Mayor and Deputy Mayor, by virtue of office (ex-officio), shall be voting Members of every committee.
- 21.2** Where a Chairman is a de facto member of another Committee or Sub-Committee, the Deputy Chairman may substitute for the Chairman when necessary.
- 21.3** Every committee shall at its first meeting before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chairman and a Deputy Chairman who shall hold office until the next Annual Council Meeting.
- 21.4** At every meeting the first business shall be to appoint a Chairman if the Chairman and Deputy Chairman are absent or have not arrived within 10 minutes of the pre-determined start time.
- 21.5** Every committee may appoint sub-committees or working groups for purposes to be specified by the Committee.
- 21.6** The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Committee shall be Members of every sub-committee or working group appointed by it unless they signify that they do not wish to serve.
- 21.7** The Standing Orders on Public Participation 8 and Rules of Debate 13 (except those relating to only speaking once) and the Standing Order on Interests Section 27, shall apply to committee and sub-committee meetings.
- 21.8** No business may be transacted at a meeting of the Committee which is not specified in the agenda for the meeting unless the Chairman of the meeting agrees that the item should be considered as a matter of urgency and the reason for the urgency shall be specified in the minutes.
- 21.9** The agenda for Committee meeting shall be sent electronically to all Members of the Council, such members of the press who request notification of meetings and advertised on public notice boards, in accordance with 3.0h and 3.0i, although failure to comply with this Standing Order shall not invalidate the proceedings of the Committee.

22. Special Meetings

- 22.0** The Chairman of a Committee or the Mayor may summon an additional meeting of that Committee or the Council at any time. An additional meeting shall also be summoned on the requisition in writing of not less than two members of the Committee. The summons shall set out the business to be considered at the special meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.

23. Voting in Committees

- 23.0** Members of Committees and sub-committees entitled to vote shall vote by show of hands.

- 23.1** *Chairmen of committees and sub-committees shall in the case of an equality of votes have a second or casting vote.*

24. Presence of Non-Members of Committees

- 24.0** A Member who has proposed a motion, which has been referred to any committee of which he/she is not a member, may explain his/her motion to the committee but shall not vote.

- 24.1** Any Council Member is entitled to be present as a non-voting Member at any committee or sub-committee of which they are not a member even if members of the public have been excluded by means of a resolution.

25. Delegation of Urgent and Routine Matters

- 25.0** There shall be delegated to the Town Clerk the authority to act in respect of any function of the Council on a matter which in their opinion does not admit of delay. This delegated authority shall be exercised in consultation with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor or Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee.

- 25.1** There shall be delegated to the Town Clerk the authority to act in respect of any function of a committee or sub-committee, which in their opinion either does not admit of delay or is routine. This delegated authority shall be exercised in consultation with the Mayor, Chairman or Deputy Chairman of the committee or sub-committee within whose terms of reference the particular function lies.

- 25.2** In 25.1 of this Standing Order, the reference to Chairman shall, in respect of all financial matters, be construed as a reference to the Chairman of the Policy & Resources Committee.

- 25.3** Each exercise of delegated authority under this Standing Order shall be reported for information to the next meeting of the committee or sub-committee within whose terms of reference the particular function lies and thence to Council.

- 25.4** The delegations in this Standing Order are in addition to and without prejudice to the powers of the Council or its Committees to arrange for the discharge of any of its functions by a Sub-Committee or an officer.

26. Expenditure

- 26.0** Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

- 26.1** The Financial Regulations shall be reviewed once a year.
- 26.2** The Council's Financial Regulations may make provision for authorisation of payment of money in exercising of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a Committee or to an employee.

27. Interests

- 27.0** 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, they and the person to whom they are related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Town Clerk.
- 27.1** A candidate who fails so to do shall be disqualified for such appointment, and, if appointed, may be dismissed without notice.
- 27.2** The Town Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate committee any such disclosure. Where a relationship to a Member is disclosed, Standing Orders 27.0 and 27.1 shall apply as appropriate.
- 27.3** The Town Clerk shall make known the purpose this Standing Order to every candidate.

28. Canvassing of and Recommendations by Members

- 28.0** 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 Town Clerk shall make known this Standing Order to every candidate.)
- 28.1** 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 of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.
- 28.2** Standing Orders 27 and 28 shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

29. Inspection of Documents

- 29.0** A Member may for the purpose of his/her 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.

30. Unauthorised Activities

- 30.0** 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.

31. Admission of the Public and Press to Meetings

31.0 *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 the meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the exclusion.*

31.1 In accordance with Standing Order 31.0 the press shall be provided reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present.

31.2 The use of digital and social media recording tools, for example Twitter, blogging or audio recording will only be allowed as long as it is carried out in a non-disruptive manner and does not interrupt the course of the meeting.

31.3 Members choosing to use social media during Council meetings must refrain from disrupting other Members and the debate of any business being considered

31.4 Whilst those attending meetings are deemed to have consented to the filming, recording or broadcasting of meetings, those exercising the right to film, record and broadcast must respect the rights of other people attending under the Data Protection Act 1998.

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

31.6 The Council records all public meetings and the recordings are retained until the minutes of the meeting are formally approved.

32. Confidential Business

32.0 Members shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they know, or ought to be aware, is of a confidential nature.

32.1 Any Member in breach of Standing Order 32.0 may be removed from any committee or sub-committee by a resolution of the Council.

32.2 If at a meeting there arises any question relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service of any person employed by the Council, it shall be considered until the Council or the Committee (as the case may be) has decided whether or not the power of exclusion under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) 1960 Act shall be exercised.

33. Code of Conduct on Complaints

33.0 The Council shall deal with complaints of maladministration allegedly committed by the Council or by any officer or Member in such manner as adopted by the Council except for those complaints, which should be properly directed to the Monitoring Officer at the District Council.

34. Variation, Revocation and Suspension of Standing Orders

34.0 Any or every part of the Standing Orders except those which are mandatory by law, be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

34.1 A motion to permanently add or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's Standing Orders not mandatory by law shall not be carried unless two thirds of the Members at a meeting of the Council vote in favour of the same.

34.2 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.

35. Standing Orders to be given to Members

35.0 A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each Member by the Town Clerk upon receipt of the Member's declaration of acceptance of office.