



WAREHAM
Town Council

STANDING ORDERS

Adopted 16th April 2019

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1. It is implicit in these Standing Orders that the masculine shall include any recognised gender.
2. The use of the word “press” in these Standing Orders may include radio, television, film, social media and the like.
3. The Local Government Act 1972 and subsequent Acts and Regulations that are enacted from time to time will take precedence over ALL Standing Orders contained in this document.
4. The term ‘Councillor’ and ‘Member’ refer to any elected representative of Wareham Town Council.

1.0 MEETINGS

1.1 Place and Time of Meeting

Meetings shall be held in the Town Hall, Wareham commencing at 7pm unless otherwise decided at a previous meeting.

1.2 The Annual Council Meeting (Mayor Making)

- a) In an election year the Annual Council Meeting shall be held on or within fourteen days following the day on which the Councillors elected take office.**
- b) In a year which is not an election year the Annual Council Meeting shall be held on such day in May as the Council may determine.**

1.3 Ordinary Council Meetings

In every year the Council shall hold, in addition to the Annual Council Meeting, such other meetings as shall be determined but not less than three meetings.

1.4 Extraordinary Council Meetings

- a) An Extraordinary Meeting of the Council may be called at any time by the Chairman.**
- b) If the Chairman of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven clear days of having been requested in writing to do so by two Councillors, any two Councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council.**
- c) An Extraordinary Meeting shall be held within ten clear days of the requisition and where the meeting is called by members the notice shall be signed by those members and shall specify the business to be transacted at the meeting.**

1.5 Annual Town Meeting

The Annual Town Meeting at which the Town Mayor is Chairman and the public has an opportunity to put proposals to the Council for consideration is to be held in April in accordance with Schedule 12 Part III of the Local Government Act 1972.

1.6 Committee, Sub-committee and Sub-group Meetings

Specific Standing Orders regarding Committees, Sub-committees and Sub-groups are set out in section 8 of these Standing Orders.

1.7 Notice of Meeting

- a) A minimum three clear days' notice shall be given of the time, date, place and agenda of a meeting in accordance with Schedule 12 Part II 10(2) of the Local Government Act 1972.**

The meaning of 'clear days' is that the day on which the notice was issued, and the day of the meeting are not included. Additionally, in accordance with Section 243 of the

Local Government Act 1972, the following days do not count when computing the three clear days:

- **Sundays**
- **A day of the Christmas break**
- **A day of the Easter break**
- **Bank Holidays**
- **Days appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning**

b) The Notice of Meeting shall:

- Specify the business to be transacted
- Be served on Councillors by delivery or post at their residences a signed Notice of Meeting confirming the time, place and the agenda of the meeting, and
- Be displayed in a conspicuous public place

1.8 Quorum for Meetings

a) 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. The quorum for Council meetings is therefore six members and all other meetings three members.

b) 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.

1.9 Amendment of the calendar of meetings during the Civic Year

The Chairman of a meeting shall have the authority to change the date and time of a meeting due to lack of business or where there would be insufficient business to warrant a meeting due to the non-availability of a significant report, quotation, legal document or advice and the like or the non-availability of a person required to advise the meeting, make a presentation or address the meeting.

2.0 CHAIRMANSHIP

2.1 Annual Election of Chairman of the Council

The election of a Chairman and a Vice-chairman shall be the first business to be completed at the Annual Council Meeting.

2.2 Chairman of the Council's Term of Office

a) The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the Annual Council Meeting until his successor is elected at that meeting.

b) 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 annual 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 shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

- c) 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 Annual Council 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 shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

2.3 Vice-chairman of the Council's Term of Office

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 Council Meeting (Mayor Making).

2.4 Chairman to Preside

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 elected by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.

2.5 Chairman of the Meeting

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

2.6 Chairman of the Council's Powers

Subject to Standing Orders which indicate otherwise, 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.

2.7 Chairman's Casting Vote

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.

2.8 Chairman's Decision

The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of Standing Orders at the meeting shall be final.

3.0 ORDER OF BUSINESS

3.1 Annual Council Meeting (Mayor Making).

In an election year, Councillor Acceptance of Office forms must be delivered to the Town Clerk prior to the commencement of the Annual Council Meeting (Mayor Making).

The order of proceedings shall be as follows:

The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman (Town Mayor) and Vice-Chairman (Deputy Mayor) of the Council.

3.11 Civic Business: Mayor Making

- a) Outgoing Town Mayor takes the Chair.
- b) A prayer may be said by the town Mayors Chaplain before the meeting Commences.
- c) Address by the out-going Town Mayor including the presentation of cheques.
- d) Outgoing Town Mayor to open the meeting.
- e) Election of Town Mayor for the new civic year.
- f) The Town Mayor makes the Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- g) Apologies for absence.
- h) Declarations of interest.
- i) Vote of thanks to the outgoing Town Mayor.
- j) Incoming Mayor presents outgoing Mayor with Past Mayor's Badge.
- k) Mayor may declare a Town Mayor's Escort (presentation of Badge).
- l) Mayor may declare appointment of Town Mayor's Chaplain.
- m) C Mayor may confirm appointment of Officials: Sergeant at Mace, Mayor's Constables, Town Crier, Mayor's Guide, Mayor's Scout, Mayor's Air Training Cadet and Mayor's Boys Brigade & Girls Association Cadet.
- n) Election of Deputy Town Mayor.
- o) Presentation of Deputy Town Mayors Badge of Office.
- p) Deputy Town Mayor may declare an Escort.
- q) Presentation of Deputy Mayor's Escort with Badge of Office.
- r) The new Deputy Town Mayor is invited to join those on the dais.
- s) Town Clerk to confirm possession of regalia, deeds, and trust investments in custody of the Council and to confirm arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.
- t) Civic Service: announcement of date.
- u) Town Mayor to adjourn the meeting to a day no later than the Tuesday immediately following the Annual Meeting of the Town Council.
- v) Town Mayor invites guests to a Reception in the Corn Exchange.

3.12 Business of the reconvened Annual Council Meeting

- a) Apologies for absence;
- b) Declarations of interests;
- c) Public participation time;
- d) Confirmation of Minutes (which will be the Minutes of the last Council meeting of the previous civic year);
- e) Matters arising.
- f) **In an ordinary year of election of the Council to make arrangements to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.**
- g) To appoint the following Standing Committees and Panel of the Council and to appoint Members to serve on these bodies for the forthcoming Civic Year:
 - Policy, Resources and Finance Committee.
 - Amenities Committee
 - Planning and Transport Committee
 - Human Resources Panel

- h) To adjourn the meeting to enable Extraordinary Meetings of the Standing Committees and the Human Resources Panel to be held to elect their Chairman
- i) To appoint other Committees, Steering Groups, Panels or Working Parties and to appoint Members to serve on these bodies for the forthcoming Civic Year:
 - Museum Committee
 - Wareham in Bloom Committee.
 - Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.
- j) To appoint representatives on outside bodies for Civic Year.
- k) To conduct the ordinary business of the Town Council

3.2 Ordinary Council Meeting

The first business shall be to appoint a Chairman if the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Council are absent as provided by Standing Order 2.4. The order of business shall then be as follows:

- a) To receive apologies for absence.
- b) To receive declaration of interests
- c) Public Participation Time.
- d) To receive any presentations previously arranged by Council.
- e) To receive reports from local Members of Dorset Council and Representatives on Outside Bodies. Reports from all sources must be forwarded to the Town Clerk five working days in advance for inclusion with the agenda if they are to be presented to Members
- f) **Confirmation of a true and accurate record of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council**
- g) Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.
- h) To receive the financial statements and instruct signatories to sign orders of payments.
- i) To receive such communications and make such announcements as the person presiding may wish to communicate to the Council.
- j) To receive and consider reports from officers of the Council.
- k) To receive and consider reports and minutes of Committees and Sub-groups.
- l) **To receive and consider motions in the order in which they have been notified.**
- m) To authorise the sealing of documents.
- n) Any other business specified in the agenda.
- o) To answer written questions from members.
- p) Any other items the Chairman deems urgent (for report or for the next meeting).

3.3 Variation of Order of Business

A motion to vary the order of business:

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

4.0 MOTIONS

4.1 Motions Requiring Written Notice

- a) Notice

Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no motion may be moved at an Ordinary Council Meeting unless the business to which it relates has been included in the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Town Clerk at least five clear days before the next meeting of the Council.

b) Notices to be dated

The Town Clerk shall date and number every notice of motion received in the order that they are received and shall enter it in a book which shall be open to the inspection of every member of the Council.

c) Motions to be set Out in Agenda

The Town Clerk shall insert in the agenda for every meeting all notices of motion properly given in the order in which they have been received, unless the member giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that he intends to move at some later meeting or that he withdraws it. 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.

d) Scope of Motion

A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and, in any event, shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

e) Motions Not Moved

If a motion specified in the agenda 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.

f) Reference to Committee

If the subject matter of a motion comes within the remit of a Committee, 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 considers it to be a matter of urgency or convenient or conducive to the despatch of business, may allow it to be dealt with at the meeting at which it was moved.

4.2 Motions Not Requiring Written Notice

Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without notice:

- a) to appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
- b) to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting.
- c) to move to a vote.
- d) to approve the minutes.
- e) to change the order of business on the agenda.
- f) to close or adjourn the debate.
- g) to refer a matter to a Committee, Sub-group or Officer of the Council.
- h) to appoint a Committee, Sub-group or any members thereof.
- i) to adopt a report or recommendation.
- j) to require a written report.
- k) to authorise the sealing of documents.
- l) to amend a motion.
- k) to withdraw a motion or amendment.
- m) to extend the time limits for speaking.

- n) to defer consideration of a motion.
- o) to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest.
- p) to not hear further from a Councillor or a member of the public.
- q) to exclude a Councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct.
- r) to temporarily suspend the meeting.
- s) to suspend a particular Standing Order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements).
- t) to adjourn or close the meeting.

4.3 Rescission of Previous Resolution

- a) A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least six Councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with Standing Order 4.1, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b) When a motion moved pursuant to Standing Order 4.3 a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

5.0 RULES OF DEBATE

5.1 Draft Minutes

- a) Draft minutes will be distributed to Councillors to review and comment upon any typographical corrections that may be required in advance of publication. No discussion of the unconfirmed minutes shall take place upon their accuracy.
- b) The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution with each page initialled and shall be signed by the Chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.

5.2 Motions and Amendments

- a) Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda, unless the order is changed at the Chairman's discretion for reasons of expediency.
- b) 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 Chairman, be put in writing and handed to him before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.

5.3 Secunder's Speech

A member, when seconding a resolution or amendment may, if he then declares his intention to do so, reserve his speech until a later period of the debate.

5.4 Contents of Speech

A member shall direct his speech to the matter under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a point of order.

5.5 Length of Speech

No speech by a mover of a motion shall exceed five minutes and no other speech shall exceed three minutes except by consent of the Chairman.

5.6 Amendments to Motions

- a) An amendment shall be either:
 - i) To leave out words;
 - ii) To leave out words and insert others;
 - iii) To insert or add words.
- b) An amendment shall not have the effect of negating the motion under consideration.
- c) If an amendment is 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.
- d) A further amendment shall not be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.

5.7 Alteration of Motion

A member may, with the consent of his seconder, move amendments to his own motion.

5.8 Withdrawal of Motion

If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder.

5.9 When a Member May Speak Again

- a) With the exception of the Chairman, a member, other than the mover of a motion, shall not speak more than once on any motion except:
 - i) At the discretion of the Chairman;
 - ii) To move an amendment or further amendment;
 - iii) To speak on an amendment;
 - iv) On a point of order;
 - v) On a point of information;
 - vi) In personal explanation;
 - vii) To move a closure.
 - viii) To exercise a right of reply.
- b) During the debate on a motion, a Councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the Councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking.
- c) A member may speak again to give information, which must be factual and relevant to the issue under discussion and may include a correction to an error of fact made by another member.
- d) A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by the member who may have been misunderstood.

5.10 Motions Which May be Moved During a Debate

When a motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except:

- a) To amend the motion;
- b) That a member named be not further heard;
- c) That a member named leaves the meeting;
- d) That the motion be referred to a Committee or sub-group;
- e) To exclude the public and press;
- f) To proceed to the next business;
- g) To move a closure motion;
- h) To adjourn the meeting; or
- i) To suspend particular Standing Order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.

5.11 Closure Motions

a) At the end of any speech a member may, without comment, move:

- i) That the motion be put to the vote;
- ii) That the debate be now adjourned;
- iii) That the meeting be now adjourned.

b) On a proposal that the motion be put to the vote:

Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.

c) On a proposal to adjourn the debate or the meeting:

- i) If such a motion is seconded and the Chairman is of the opinion that the matter has not been sufficiently debated and cannot reasonably be so, he shall put the closure motion to the vote without giving the mover of the original motion a right of reply.
- ii) The adjournment of a debate or of the meeting shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

5.12 Right of Reply

- a) The mover of a motion shall have a right of reply immediately before the motion is put to the vote.
- b) 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.

5.13 Members to Stand

A Member shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a Member has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]. The Chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking. This Standing Order shall not apply to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

5.14 Respect for the Chair

- a) The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.
- b) A member who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting. 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.
- c) Whenever the Chairman speaks during a debate, all other members shall be silent.

6.0 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

6.1 Written Questions

A member at an Ordinary Council Meeting may ask the Chairman of the Council or the Chairman of Committee or Sub-group or the Town Clerk any question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the Town or its people, provided notice of the question has been received in writing by the Town Clerk not later than 10.00 a.m. on the working day prior to the meeting.

6.2 Oral Questions

A member, with or without notice, may ask the Chairman of the Council or the Chairman of a Committee or Sub-group any question upon the proceedings of the Council or of the Committee or Sub-group then before the Council, provided the question is put before the Council's consideration of those proceedings is concluded. This Standing Order shall not apply to questions relating to the business of the Human Resources Panel.

6.3 Questions Regarding the Human Resources Panel

A member at an Ordinary Council Meeting may ask the Chairman of the Human Resources Panel or the Town Clerk a question relating to any matter relating to the business of the Human Resources Panel provided it is submitted in writing in accordance with Standing Order 6.1.

6.4 Questions Generally

- a) Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.
- b) A person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer.

6.5 Answers to Questions

An answer may take the form of a direct oral answer, or where a reply to a question cannot be given orally, a written answer will be given. All questions and answers shall be minuted when raised under Standing Order 3.2 t).

7.0 VOTING

7.1 Majority

Every decision shall be decided by a majority of the members present and voting.

7.2 By Show of Hands

Voting shall be by show of hands.

7.3 Recorded Vote

a) **If any member so requests the voting shall be recorded in order to show whether each member gave his vote for or against or abstained.** Such a request must be made before the vote is taken.

b) A recorded vote will be taken to approve the Annual Precept for the forthcoming year.

7.4 Recording Individual Member's Vote

Where any member requests it, immediately after the vote is taken, their vote shall be recorded in the minutes to show whether they voted for or against the resolution or abstained from voting.

7.5 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 simple majority of votes is given for one person. The number of votes cast for each person in the final vote shall be given and recorded in the minutes.

7.6 Chairman's Casting Vote

The Chairman shall have a casting vote in accordance with Standing Order 2.7 above.

8.0 COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND SUB-GROUPS

8.1 Appointment of Committees, Sub-Committee and Sub-groups by Council

The Council will appoint the Standing Committees and the Human Resources Panel, and may, at that meeting or at any other time, appoint other such Committees, Sub-Committees and Sub-groups (Panels, Steering Groups or Working Parties) as are necessary, but subject to any statutory provision in that regard.

8.2 Standing Committees

The following Committees shall be the Standing Committees of the Council, and shall consist of seven members, save that the Policy, Resources and Finance Committee shall have nine members:

- i) Policy, Resources and Finance Committee
- ii) Planning and Transport Committee
- iii) Amenities Committee

8.3 Delegated Authority

The Standing Committees have delegated authority from the Council to make decisions in accordance with their Terms of Reference and spend within budget. The Planning and Transport Committee also has delegated authority to consider and comment on planning matters referred from the planning authority to the Council.

8.4 Representation on Committees, Sub-committees and Sub-groups

Membership of all Standing Committees shall be allocated in proportion to the total number of seats held on the Council by each political party or other such grouping, the representatives being selected by their groups. This shall not apply to Sub-Committees or Sub-groups, but each group shall be represented if possible. Members with no political affiliation shall have equal rights with members of political parties.

8.5 Appointment of Sub-committees and Sub-groups by Committees

Every Standing Committee may appoint Sub-Committees and Sub-groups for purposes to be specified by that Committee.

8.6 Term of Office

No member shall be appointed to a Committee, Sub-committee or Sub-group so as to hold office later than the next Annual Council Meeting.

8.7 Dissolution and Change

- a) All Committees, Sub-committees and Sub-groups shall be dissolved at the Annual Council Meeting and may be re-appointed subject to compliance with Standing Order 3.12 g) h) i) and j)
- b) The Council or a Standing Committee may at any time dissolve or alter the membership of a Committee, Sub-committee or Sub-group.

8.8 Non-Members of Council

The Council or a Standing Committee may appoint persons other than members of the Council to any Committee, Sub-committee or Sub-group, but not to a Standing Committee or the Human Resources Panel.

8.9 Election of Chairman

- a) The Standing Committees and the Human Resources Panel shall elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman at the Annual Council Meeting.
- b) Every other Committee, Sub-committee or Sub-group shall, at its first meeting before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chairman and may elect a Vice-Chairman who shall hold office until the next Annual Council Meeting.

8.10 Extraordinary Meetings

- a) The Chairman of the Council or the Chairman of a Committee (or a sub-committee) may call an extraordinary meeting of that Committee at any time.
- b) If the Chairman of a Committee fails to call an Extraordinary Meeting of the Committee within seven clear days of receiving a signed request from two members of the Committee, then any two members may convene an Extraordinary Meeting of the Committee. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two Councillors.
- c) An Extraordinary Meeting shall be held within ten clear days of the requisition and the notice shall set out the business to be considered at the Extraordinary Meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.

8.11 Emergency Procedures

If there are, in the opinion of the Town Clerk, urgent matters that cannot wait for a meeting of a Committee or Council between ordinary meetings, he shall be authorised to consult with, as an emergency procedure, the Town Mayor, Chairman and Vice-chairman of the appropriate Committee in order to obtain a decision which will then be reported and minuted at the next ordinary meeting of the Committee or the Council without discussion.

8.12 Membership of Sub-committees

The Chairman of the Committee shall be a member of every Sub-Committee appointed by it unless they signify they do not wish to serve.

8.13 Presence of Non-Members of Committees etc at Other Meetings

- a) A member who has proposed a motion, which has been referred to any Committee of which he is not a member, may explain his motion to the Committee but shall not vote.
- b) Any member shall be entitled to attend any meetings of any Committee, Sub-Committee or Sub-group of which he is not a member, with the exception of the Human Resources Panel. He may not vote but may speak at the invitation of the Chairman.

8.14 Standing Orders to Apply to Committees, Sub-committees and Sub-groups

Standing Orders shall apply in so far as they are appropriate to Committees, Sub-committees and Sub-groups except for Standing Orders 1.2 – 1.5, 2.1 – 2.3, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 6.1, 10.1 – 10.3 and 13.4.

8.15 Members to Stand

A Member shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a Member has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]. The Chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking. This Standing Order shall not apply to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

9.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

9.1 Admission of the Public and Press to Meetings

- a) Meetings shall be open to the public and the media 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.**
- b) The public and media exclusions from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the exclusions.**

9.2 Public Participation Time

- a) Public Participation Time shall be held at the beginning of every meeting of the Council and of its Standing Committees (except the Annual Council Meeting when it will be held later in the Agenda). The Council shall maintain a procedure for the conduct of Public Participation Time.
- b) The period of time designated for public participation shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting. A member of the public shall not speak for more than three minutes.
- c) Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- d) In accordance with Standing Order 9.2(c), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

9.3 Invitation to a Member of the Public to Speak

At all meetings of the Council and its Standing Committees, but subject to Standing Order 9.1, the Chairman may, at his 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 meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at that meeting.

9.4 Disorderly Conduct by the Public

- a) No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly.
- b) If, in the opinion of the Chairman, there has been a breach of Standing Order 9.4 (a), the Chairman shall act accordingly at his discretion to restore order or close the meeting.

9.5 Inspection of Minutes

All minutes kept by the Council and by any Committee or Sub-Committee shall be open for inspection by any local government elector of the Town Council's area in accordance with the Council's Publication Scheme under the Freedom of Information Act.

9.6 Media Facilities

The media 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.

Subject to the following:

- a) a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public.**
- b) To "report" means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place, or later, or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.**
- c) A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**

9.7 Reporting of Meetings

Reporting of meetings under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 is permitted under the Town Council's Policy on 'Video and Audio Recording and Use of Social Media'.

10.0 NOMINATION OF TOWN MAYOR AND DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR ELECT

10.1 Nomination of Town Mayor Elect

- a) Nomination of the Town Mayor Elect shall be by rotation and in an order determined by the length of continual service commencing with the longest serving member and progressing until all members have had the opportunity to serve as Town Mayor whereupon the cycle recommences with the longest serving member save that a minimum length of continual service of four years has been served.
- b) In the event of two or more members having the same length of service, they shall be nominated in alphabetical order.
- c) Any member shall be free to decline the nomination whereupon the next in order shall be offered the nomination.
- d) The Town Mayor shall serve for one year.

10.2 Nomination of Deputy Town Mayor Elect

- a) Nomination as Deputy Town Mayor Elect shall follow the same procedure as set out in Standing Order 10.1, save that nominations shall commence with the second longest serving member, but subject to a minimum length of continual service of three years. After one year the Deputy Town Mayor shall be nominated Town Mayor Elect.

- b) The Town Clerk shall maintain a register listing Councillors in order of seniority from which he shall contact the next Councillor in line for the position of Deputy Town Mayor Elect to ascertain if he wishes to accept the nomination. If he declines the nomination the Town Clerk shall contact the next most senior Councillor until one is prepared to stand. The name of the nominee shall be stated in the agenda item.

10.3 Nomination Meeting

Nominations for Town Mayor Elect and Deputy Town Mayor Elect shall take place at an Ordinary Council Meeting in February or March each year.

11.0 OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES AND CONTRACTORS

11.1 Proper Officer

- a) The Council's Proper Officer shall be the Town Clerk, who shall fulfil all the duties assigned to the post by statute, regulation or order and set out in the contract of employment.
- b) During periods of absence of the Town Clerk, the next most senior officer available shall undertake the role of the Proper Officer and shall fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer.

11.2 Discussions on Matters Affecting Employees of the Council

If at a meeting there arises any discussion on matters relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service, of any person employed by the Council, it shall only be considered by the Council or other meeting (as the case may be) following the exclusion of the press and public in accordance with Standing Order 9.1.

11.3 Appointment of Employees

- a) If a candidate for any appointment with the Council is, to his knowledge, related to any member of, or holder of any office under the Council, he and the person to whom he is related, shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Town Clerk. A candidate who fails so to do shall be disqualified for such appointment, and if appointed, may be dismissed without notice. The Town Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate meeting any such disclosure. Where a relationship to a member is disclosed, The Town Clerk shall make known the meaning of this Standing Order to every candidate.
- b) Canvassing of members of the Council, or of any meeting, directly or indirectly, for any appointment with the Council, shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Town Clerk shall make known the purport of this sub paragraph of this Standing Order to every candidate.
- c) A member of the Council, or of any meeting, shall not solicit for any person for appointment with 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.

11.4 Applications to Tender

Standing Orders 11.3 a) above shall apply to tenders as if the person submitting the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

11.5 Handling Staff Matters

- a) Councillors must address all matters concerning staff to the Town Clerk.
- b) Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the Chairman of Human Resources Panel or, if he is not available, the Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of Human Resources Panel of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Human Resources Panel at its next meeting.
- c) Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff (or other members of staff) shall contact the Chairman of Human Resources Panel or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman of Human Resources Panel in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of Human Resources Panel.
- d) Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by [the member of staff's job title] relates to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Human Resources Panel this shall be communicated to another member of the Human Resources Panel which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Human Resources Panel.
- e) Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- f) In accordance with Standing Order 14.1, persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in Standing Order 10.3d).

12.0 MEMBERS' OBLIGATIONS AND RIGHTS

12.1 Code of Conduct and Dispensations for Councillors and co-opted members

- a) The Council shall maintain a Code of Conduct for Councillors and co-opted members which shall be read in conjunction with these Standing Orders, based on a recognised code.
- b) **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer**
- c) **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with Standing Order 12(b) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
 - i) **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
 - ii) **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area;**

or

iii) it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

12.2 Code of Conduct Complaints

Any complaint about a Councillor's conduct should be regarded as a Code of Conduct complaint. It is not appropriate for the Council's Grievance Procedures to deal with complaints about Councillors even if the matter was raised as a grievance by an employee. A Council can only impose those sanctions proposed by the Monitoring Officer.

12.3 Unauthorised Activities

Unless duly authorised no Councillor shall:

- i) inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
- ii) issue orders, instructions or directions.

12.4 Inspection of Documents

a) A member may, for the purpose of his official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in possession of the Council and if copies are available shall, on request, be supplied for the like purpose with a copy. Copies of documents relating to contracts and legal proceedings shall not be made available without the approval of the Council.

b) All minutes kept by the Council and by any Committee or Sub-Committee shall be open for inspection by any member of the Council.

12.5 Confidential Business

Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.

12.6 Disorderly Conduct by Members

The provisions of Standing Order 9.4 above shall apply to members.

12.7 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to be given to Members

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

13.0 MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

13.1 Record of Attendance

The names of all members present during the whole or part of a meeting shall be recorded in the attendance register and **the minutes of a meeting shall record the names of members present.**

13.2 Finance

- a) **The Council shall maintain Financial Regulations governing the conduct of the Council's financial transactions.**
- b) Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

13.3 Sealing of Documents and Deeds

- a) A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b) Subject to Standing Order 13.3(a), the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two Councillors who shall sign the deed as witnesses.**

13.4 Liaison with Principal Councillors

An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward Councillors of Dorset Council representing the area of the Council. Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to Dorset Council shall be sent to the ward Councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.

13.5 Maladministration

The Council shall maintain a Complaints Procedure which shall be read in conjunction with these Standing Orders. The Council shall deal with complaints of maladministration allegedly committed by the Council or by any officer or member in such a manner as adopted by the Council, except for those complaints which should be properly directed to the Dorset Councils' Standards Committee.

13.6 Variation, Revocation and Suspension of Standing Orders

- a) All or part of a Standing Order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b) A motion permanently to add, vary or revoke one or more Standing Orders, not mandatory by law, shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next Ordinary Council Meeting.

13.7 Relations with the Press/Media

Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its Councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

14.0 MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

14.1 Secure Information.

The Council shall maintain a Management of Information Policy which shall be read in conjunction with these Standing Orders.

14.2 Responsibilities to Provide Information

- a) **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**
- b) **The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

14.3 Responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation

- a) **The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.**
- b) **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**
- c) **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- d) **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**
- e) **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f) **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

15.0 ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

The Council shall maintain a policy for the Financial Regulations of the Town Council which shall be read in conjunction with these Standing Orders.