

Metheringham, Sots Hole and Tanvats Parish Council

Standing Orders - Index

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1 Meetings

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| Mandatory for full Council meetings | ● |
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- 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.**
 - (i) **Smoking is not permitted at any meeting of the council or committees.**
- b **When calculating the 3 clear days for notice of a meeting to councillors and the public, 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 shall not count.**
- c **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- d Subject to standing order 1(c) above at the discretion of the Chairman, members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.
- e Subject to Standing Order 1 (c) and (d) the public will be given 15 minutes before the start of the meeting to address the meeting and thereafter cannot speak. A maximum of three minutes will be given to each parishioner to address the council. Where an organization or group wishes to address the council they should appoint a spokesperson.
- f In accordance with standing order 1(d) above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate.
- g The Chairman may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be

referred to a Councillor for a oral response or to an employee for a written or oral response.

h A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in an addendum which is circulated with the minutes of that meeting.

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

j Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chairman shall direct the order of speaking.

● k **Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is not permitted without the Council's prior (written) consent.**



● l **In accordance with standing order 1(c) above, the press shall be provided reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**



● m **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman.**

● n **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.**

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



● p **The Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote. (See also standing orders 2 (i) and (j) below.)**



● q **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on any question shall be by a show**

of hands. At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

(i) if at least two members so request voting may be by signed ballot.

● r **The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent.**



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



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



u **An interest arising from the code of conduct adopted by the Council, the existence and nature of which is required to be disclosed by a Councillor at a meeting shall be recorded in the minutes.** (*See also standing orders 7 below.*)



v **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than 3.**



w **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be adjourned. Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be transacted at a following meeting.



x Meetings shall not exceed (2) hours without a break.

2 Ordinary Council meetings

See also standing order 1 above

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.**
- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 7.30pm.**
- d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.**
- e **The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.**
- 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 order of business shall be as follows.
 - i. To receive the Chairman and Vice-Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office
 - ii. In an election year, delivery by councillors of their declarations of acceptance of office.
 - iii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council and to receive and note minutes of and/or to determine recommendations made by

- committees.
- iv. Review of delegation arrangements to committees.
 - v. Review of the terms of references for committees.
 - vi. Receipt of nominations to existing committees.
 - vii. Appointment of any new committees, confirmation of the terms of reference, the number of members (including, if appropriate, substitute councillors) and receipt of nominations to them.
 - viii. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations.
 - ix. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back.
 - x. In a year of elections, if a Council's period of eligibility to exercise the power of well being expired the day before the annual meeting, to review and make arrangements to reaffirm eligibility.
 - xi. Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment.
 - xii. Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.
 - xiii. Review of the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies.
 - xiv. Establishing or reviewing the Council's procedures.
 - xv. Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council for the year ahead.
 - xvi. To appoint leaders and members of Working Groups.
 - xvii. To resolve to appoint a Responsible Financial Officer.
 - xviii. To resolve to appoint an Internal Auditor

3 Proper Officer

- a The Council's Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or such other employee as may be nominated by the Council from time to time or (ii) such other employee appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence.
- b The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following.
 - i. Upon the Council having first resolved that service of summons on councillors confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda for a meeting by delivery or post at their residences at least 3 clear days before a meeting is not expedient electronically serve on councillors a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council and a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee at least 3 clear days before the meeting provided any such email contains the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer.
 - ii. **Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee (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, in accordance with standing order [3(b)i] above.**

- iv. Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.
- v. **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
- vi. **Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.**
- vii. Retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
- viii. Keep proper records required before and after meetings;
- ix. 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 the same.
- x. Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.
- xi. Manage the organisation, storage of and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form.
- xii. Arrange for legal deeds to be signed by 2 councillors and witnessed (*See also standing orders 12 (a)*).
- xiii. Arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- xiv. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders, procedures or job description.
- xv. In the absence of the Proper Officer the Chairman and Councillors can open Parish Council mail.
- xvi. If decisions have to be taken between meetings the Proper Officer will make these decisions following consultation between the Chairman and at least one other Councillor.

4 Motions requiring notice

- a No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda and the mover has given notice to the Council's Proper Officer at least (7) clear days before the next meeting.
- b If the nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included or rejected in the agenda.
- c Having consulted the Chairman or councillors pursuant to standing order 4(b) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
- d Every motion and resolution shall relate to the Council's statutory functions, powers and lawful obligations or shall relate to an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
 - i. If the Chairman and Vice Chairman are absent to appoint a person to preside at a

meeting.

- ii. To approve the absences of councillors.
 - iii. To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - iv. To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - v. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
 - vi. To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
 - vii. To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
 - viii. To close or adjourn debate.
 - ix. To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or an employee.
 - x. To appoint a committee or any councillors (including substitutes) thereto.
 - xi. To receive nominations to a committee.
 - xii. To dissolve a committee.
 - xiii. To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee.
 - xiv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or an employee.
 - xv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
 - xvi. To authorise legal deeds signed by two councillors and witnessed.
(See standing orders 12(a) below).
 - xvii. To authorise the payment of monies up to (£1,000.00).
 - xviii. To extend the time limit for speeches.
 - xix. To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
 - xx. To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
 - xxi. To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law.**
 - xxii. To adjourn the meeting.
 - xxiii. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
- e If a motion falls within the terms of reference of a committee or within the delegated powers conferred on an employee, a referral of the same may be made to such committee or employee provided that the Chairman may direct for it to be dealt with at the present meeting for reasons of urgency or expedience.

5 Rules of debate

- a No discussion of the Minutes shall take place except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialled by the Chairman:-
- An amendment to the minutes shall be either
- i To leave words out
 - ii To leave words out and insert others
 - iii To insert or add words.
- b A member shall remain seated when speaking unless requested to stand by the

Chairman.

- c The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.
- d Members shall address the Chairman. If two or more members wish to speak, the Chairman shall decide who to call upon.
- e Whenever the Chairman speaks during a debate all other members shall be silent.
- f A maximum of three minutes will be given to each member to address the council.

6 Code of conduct

- a **All councillors shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.**
- b All councillors shall undertake training in the code of conduct within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.
- c **If paragraph 12(2) of the code of conduct contained in the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 (SI No.1159) has been adopted by the Council or pursuant to relevant provisions in a statutory code of conduct in force at the time, councillors may exercise the rights contained in standing order 6 (d) below only if members of the public are permitted to (i) make representations, (ii) answer questions and (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted.**
- d **Councillors with a prejudicial interest in relation to any item of business being transacted at a meeting may (i) make representations, (ii) answer questions and (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted but must, thereafter, leave the room or chamber.**

7 Minutes

- a If a copy of the draft notes of a preceding meeting has been circulated to councillors no later than the day of service of the summons to attend the scheduled meeting they shall be taken as read.
- b No discussion of the draft notes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy.
- c Minutes, including any amendment to correct the accuracy of the draft notes, 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.

8 Disorderly conduct

- 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 orders, the Chairman shall express that opinion and thereafter any councillor (including the Chairman) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.
- c If a resolution made in accordance with standing orders, is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or he may adjourn the meeting.

9 Rescission of previous resolutions

- a A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least (6) councillors of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- b When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to standing order 9 (a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

10 Voting on appointments

- a Where more than 2 persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

11 Expenditure

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

delegated to a committee or to an employee.

12 Execution of legal deeds

See also standing order 4 (d) (xvi) above

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

In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 12(a) above, any two members of the Council, may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.

13 Committees

See also standing order 1 above

- a The Council may, at its annual meeting, appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. may permit committees to determine the dates of their meetings;
 - iii. shall appoint and determine the term of office of councillor or non-councillor members of such a committee (unless the appointment of non-councillors is prohibited by law) so as to hold office no later than the next annual meeting;
 - iv. may appoint substitute councillors to a committee whose role is to replace ordinary councillors at a meeting of a committee if ordinary councillors of the committee have confirmed to the Chairman before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
 - v. an ordinary member of a committee who has been replaced at a meeting by a substitute member (in accordance with standing order 13(a)(iv) above) shall not be permitted to participate in debate or vote on business at that meeting and may only speak during any public participation session during the meeting;
 - vi. may in accordance with standing orders, dissolve a committee at any time.
 - vii. The Committee can consist of members and non members, with the exception of the Finance Committee, members of which must be parish councillors.
 - viii. A quorum is required for any committee meeting, it is recommended there should be a minimum of three members.

14 Extraordinary meetings

See also standing order 1 above

- 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 7 days of having been requested to do so by two councillors,**

those two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.

- c The Chairman of a committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee at any time.
- d If the Chairman of a committee does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within (7) days of having been requested by to do so by (2) councillors, those (2) councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by (2) councillors.

15 Accounts and Financial Statement

- a All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Council's financial regulations, which shall be reviewed at least annually.
- b The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor on a monthly basis a statement summarising the Council's receipts/payments and balances for the month. This statement should include a comparison with the budget for the financial year. A Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March shall be presented to each councillor before the end of the following month of May. The Statement of Accounts of the Council (which is subject to external audit), including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to Council for formal approval before 30 June.

16 Estimates/precepts

- a **The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year.**

17 Canvassing of and recommendations by councillors

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

- c This standing order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

18 Inspection of documents

- a Subject to standing orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a councillor may, for the purpose of his official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee.

19 Unauthorized activities

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

20 Confidential business

- a Councillors shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware is of a confidential nature.
- b A councillor in breach of the provisions of standing order 20(a) above may be removed from a committee by a resolution of the Council.

21 Power of well-being

- a **Before exercising the power to promote well-being, a meeting of the full Council shall have passed a resolution to confirm it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria required to qualify as an eligible parish council.**
- b **The Council's period of eligibility begins on the date that the resolution under standing order 21 (a) above was made and expires on the day before the annual meeting of the Council that takes place in a year of ordinary elections.**
- c **After the expiry of its preceding period of eligibility, the Council continues to be an eligible council solely for the purpose of completing any activity undertaken in the exercise of the power to promote well-being which was not completed before the expiry of the Council's preceding period of eligibility referred to in standing order 21 (b) above.**

22 Matters affecting council employees

- a If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the Council has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to standing order 1(c) above.
- b Subject to the relevant employees contract regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior employee shall notify the Chairman or, in his absence, the Vice-Chairman of the Council of any absence occasioned by illness or urgency and that person shall report such absence to the full council at its next meeting.
- c The Proper Officer, Chairman or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and/or appraisal of [the employee's job title] and shall keep a written record of it. The review and/or appraisal shall be reported back and shall be subject to approval by resolution of full council.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance and disciplinary matters, refer to MPC/005/R2 Discipline Procedure and MPC/006/R2 Grievance Procedure.
- e Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of Council employees shall keep written records of all meetings relating to their performance, and capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.
- f The Council shall keep written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected.
- g Records documenting reasons for an employee's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for the same.
- h Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to employee records referred to in standing orders 22 (f) and (g) above if so justified.

23 Freedom of Information Act 2000

- a All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- b Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred to the Proper Officer who shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

24 Relations with the press/media

- a All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be processed by the Proper Officer in consultation with the Chairman.
- b In accordance with the Council's policy in respect to dealing with the press and/or other media, councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media.

25 Liaison with District and County Councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillor of the District and County representing its electoral ward.

26 Financial matters

- a The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the accounting records and systems of internal control;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the Internal Auditor and the receipt of regular reports from the Internal Auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
- b **Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of [£60,000] shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in standing order 26 (c) below.**
- c Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:
 - i. a public notice of intention to place a contract to be placed in a local newspaper;
 - ii. a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - iii. tenders are to be sent, in a sealed marked envelope, to the Proper Officer by a stated date and time;
 - iv. tenders submitted are to be opened, after the stated closing date and time, by the Proper Officer and at least one member of the Council;
 - v. tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of Council or Committee.

- d Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.
- e **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed £138,893 (or other threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time) the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No.5, as amended) and the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No. 6, as amended) apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with EU procurement rules.**

27 Allegations of breaches of the code of conduct

- a On receipt of a notification that there has been an alleged breach of the code of conduct the Proper Officer shall refer it to a committee known as the (Code of Conduct - Complaints) committee.
- b Where the notification relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of the (Code of Conduct - Complaints) committee of that fact, who, upon receipt of such notification, shall nominate a person to assume the duties of the Proper Officer set out in the remainder of this standing order, who shall continue to act in respect of that matter as such until the complaint is resolved.
- c Where a notification relates to a complaint made by an employee (not being the Proper Officer) the Proper Officer shall ensure that the employee in question does not deal with any aspect of the complaint.
- d The subject matter of notifications shall be confidential and, insofar as it is possible to do so by law, the Council (including the Proper Officer and the Chairman of the (Code of Conduct -Complaints) committee shall take the steps set out below, together with other steps considered necessary, to maintain confidentiality.
 - i. Draft the summonses and agendas in such a way that the identity and subject matter of the complaint are not disclosed.
 - ii. Ensure that any background papers containing the information set out in standing order 27 (a) above are not made public.
 - iii. Ensure that the public and press are excluded from meetings as appropriate.
 - iv. Ensure that the minutes of meetings preserve confidentiality.
 - v. Consider any liaison that may be required with the person or body with statutory responsibility for the investigation of the matter.
- e Standing order 27 (d) above should not be taken to prohibit the Council (whether through the Proper Officer or the Chairman of the (Code of Conduct - Complaints) committee or otherwise) from disclosing information to members and officers of the Council or to other persons where such disclosure is necessary to deal with the complaint or is required by

- law.
- f The (Code of Conduct - Complaints) committee shall have the power to:
 - i. seek documentary and other evidence from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
 - ii. seek and share information relevant to the complaint;
 - iii. grant the member involved a financial indemnity in respect of legal costs, which shall be in accordance with the law and subject to approval by a meeting of the full Council.

 - g References in standing order 27 to a notification shall be taken to refer to a communication of any kind which relates to a breach or an alleged breach of the code of conduct by a councillor.

28 Variation, revocation and suspension of standing orders

- a Any or every part of the standing orders, except those which are mandatory by law, may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

- b A motion to permanently add to or to vary or to revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders not mandatory by law shall not be carried unless two-thirds of the councillors at a meeting of the Council vote in favour of the same.

29 Standing orders to be given to councillors

- a The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor upon delivery of his declaration of acceptance of office.

- b The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.

- c A councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than 3 times in one meeting may result in him being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.

30 Formal Meetings on Council business

- a At least TWO members, with or without the Clerk must be present at any meeting with a professional body.