

ITCHINGFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

These Standing Orders were revised, approved and adopted by Itchingfield Parish Council on 22nd May 2023.

1. Meetings

- (a) The Statutory Annual Meeting in an election year shall be held between 4 and 18 days after the ordinary day of elections to the Council and in a year which is not an election year shall be held on a day in May.
- (b) In addition to the Annual Meeting, a minimum of three meetings shall be held each year on such dates and at such times as shall be fixed by the Council.
- (c) Additional meetings shall be held each year on such dates and at such times as shall be fixed by the Council.
- (d) The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a Bank Holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.
- (e) The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include The day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice.
- (f) In the event of the necessity of holding a virtual Parish Council Meeting, the Clerk is authorised to request of the general public that questions/comments for the attention of the Parish Council are submitted to her at least 24 hours ahead of said Meeting.
- (e) A meeting shall not exceed a period of 3 hours.

2. Chairman of Meeting

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

3. Quorum

- (a) Four members shall constitute a quorum.
- (b) Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors or councillors with voting rights present and voting.
- (c) No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least four members of the council are present (i.e. a quorum will be one-third of 11 members).
- (d) 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

4. Voting

- (a) Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- (b) Subject to (c) and (d) below the Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may give a casting vote even though he gave no original vote.
- (c) If a person presiding at the annual meeting would have ceased to be a member of the council but for the statutory provisions which preserve the membership of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman until the end of their term of Office he may not give an original vote in an election for Chairman.
- (d) The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Chairman.

5. Order of Business

At each Annual Meeting the first business shall be:

- (a) To elect a Chairman.
- (b) To receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.
- (c) In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.
- (d) To decide when any Declarations of Acceptance of Office which have not been received as provided by law shall be received.
- (e) To elect a Vice-Chairman.
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.
- (f) At every meeting other than the Annual Meeting the first business shall be to appoint a Chairman if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be absent and to receive such Declarations of Acceptance of Office (if any) as are required by law to be made, or if not then received to decide when they shall be received.
- (g) After consideration to approve the signature of the Minutes by the person presiding as a correct record.
- (h) To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.

6. Previous Resolutions

- (a) A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 5 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer 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 6(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months

7. Draft Minutes

- (a) If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- (c) There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy.
- (d) The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- (d) If the Chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect;
“The Chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.
- (e) Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 7(e) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

8. Expenditure

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

9. Voting in Committees

- (a) Chairman of committees and sub-committee shall in the case of an equality of votes have a second or casting vote. (Only required if committee established).

10. Interests

- (a) If any member has any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, within the meaning of sections 94-95 of the Local Government Act, 1972, in any contract proposed contract or other matter, he shall, while it is under consideration by the Council, withdraw from the meeting unless the interest is trivial in the manner described in section 97(5) or:-
 - (i) The disability imposed upon him by those sections has been removed by the District Council; or
 - (ii) The council invite him to remain: or
 - (iii) The contract, proposed contract or other matter is under consideration as part of the report of a committee and is not itself the subject of debate.
- (b) The Clerk shall record in a book to be kept for the purpose, particulars of any notice given by any member or any officer of the Council of a pecuniary interest in a contract, and the book shall be open during reasonable hours of the day for the inspection of any member.
- (c) If any member has a non-pecuniary interest within the ambit of the National Code of Local Government Conduct, he shall declare it and thereupon be invited to withdraw from the meeting.

11. Inspection of Documents

- (a) All documents kept by the Council and by any committee shall be open for the inspection of any member of the Council.

12. Admission of the Public and Press to Meetings

- (a) 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.
- (b) 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.
- (c) The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 12(b) above shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- (d) Subject to standing order 12(c) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than 2 minutes unless directed otherwise by the Chairman.
- (e) In accordance with standing order 12(b) above, 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.
- (f) A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and remain seated when speaking unless otherwise requested by the Chairman.

- (g) A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the Chairman of the meeting.
- (h) 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.
- (i) Subject to standing order 12(j), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. 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.
- (j) A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.
- (k) The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.

13. Filming/Photographing/Audio Recording of meetings by members of the Public and Press to Meetings

- (a) The protocol for the use of media tools at meetings held in public:
 - (i) Allows filming and audio recording of meetings by both representatives of the media and members of the public using small media tools, provided that a request is submitted to the Clerk no later than 5.00pm two working days before the meeting (e.g. the deadline for requests for a Monday meeting would be 5.00pm on the preceding Wednesday). The Clerk will then liaise with the Chairman of the meeting to determine whether the request accords with the general principle of transparency without disrupting the meeting or inhibiting community involvement in the proceedings.
 - (ii) Any filming or audio recording must take place from fixed positions in the meeting room agreed with the Chairman of the meeting, in liaison with the Clerk.
 - (iii) At the start of the meeting the Chairman will advise all persons present if filming or recording has been allowed. Visitors to a meeting, including persons registered to speak may, at this point, elect not be filmed, recorded or photographed.