



# **NALC MODEL STANDING ORDERS 2018 – adopted by South Wonston Parish Council 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

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**INTRODUCTION .....4**

**1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS.....6**

**2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS .....7**

**3. MEETINGS GENERALLY .....8**

**4. COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES .....11**

**5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS .....12**

**6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES .....15**

**7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS .....15**

**8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS.....15**

**9. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER.....16**

**10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE.....16**

**11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION .....17**

**12. DRAFT MINUTES .....18**

**13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS .....18**

**14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS .....20**

**15. PROPER OFFICER.....20**

**16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER .....22**

**17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS .....22**

**18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT .....23**

**19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS .....24**

**20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION .....26**

**21. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION .....26**

**22. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA .....27**

**23. EXECUTION OF LEGAL DEEDS.....27**

**24. COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS.....27**

**25. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES .....28**

**26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY .....28**

## INTRODUCTION

These Standing Orders, based on the National Association of Local Councils' (NALC) Model Standing Orders 2018, have been reviewed and updated in May 2020, March 2021, May 2022 and, in May 2023, have been reviewed, revised and adapted to suit the needs of South Wonston Parish Council.

## HOW TO USE STANDING ORDERS

Standing Orders are the written rules of a local council. Standing Orders are essential to regulate the proceedings of a meeting. A council may also use Standing orders to confirm or refer to various internal organisational and administrative arrangements. The Standing Orders of a council are not the same as the policies of a council but standing orders may refer to them.

Local councils operate within a wide statutory framework. Standing Orders incorporate and reference many statutory requirements to which councils are subject. It is not possible for Standing Orders to contain or reference all the statutory or legal requirements which apply to local councils. For example, it is not practical for Standing Orders to document all obligations under data protection legislation. The statutory requirements to which a council is subject apply whether or not they are incorporated in a council's Standing Orders.

Standing Orders do not include Financial Regulations. Financial Regulations are Standing Orders to regulate and control the financial affairs and accounting procedures of a local council. The Financial Regulations, as opposed to the Standing Orders of a council, include most of the requirements relevant to the council's Responsible Financial Officer.

## DRAFTING NOTES

**It is NALC's view that all model Standing Orders will generally be suitable for councils and it is recommended that councils adopt them without changing them or their meaning. However, no council faces exactly similar conditions and, since 2018, both the working environment and the political landscape have undergone considerable change. Accordingly, South Wonston Parish Council's Standing Orders have been adjusted to reflect those changes in order for it to operate effectively and in accordance with current legislation.**

For convenience, the word "councillor" is used in Standing Orders and, unless the context suggests otherwise, includes a non-councillor with or without the right to vote at meetings.

A model standing order that includes brackets like this '( )' requires information to be inserted by a council. ***This was replaced in Red, Bold and Italic.*** Examples of this

will be found in this document. Other additions/revisions will be seen in Red or Black Bold.

## 1. **RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS**

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chair of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall be considered even if early verbal or written notice is not provided.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to their own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- j Subject to Standing Order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chair of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chair of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Unless permitted by the chair of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in

the debate on a motion except:

- i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
  - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since the councillor last spoke;
  - iii. to make a point of order;
  - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
  - v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p 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. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the Standing Order which may have been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting the councillor is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
- i. to amend the motion;
  - ii. to proceed to the next business;
  - iii. to adjourn the debate;
  - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
  - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
  - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
  - vii. to exclude the public and press;
  - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
  - ix. to suspend particular Standing Order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chair 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 their right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved under Standing Order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed **30** minutes without the consent of the chair of the meeting.

## 2. **DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS**

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this Standing Order is ignored, the chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chair of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chair of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under Standing Order 2(b) is ignored, the chair of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

### 3. MEETINGS GENERALLY

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

- a **Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice This does not apply to sub committee meetings..**
- d **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion. NB Sub committee meetings do not need to be open to the public.**
- e 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. Members of the public who make representations will be asked to introduce themselves and indicate if they represent any specific associations or groups.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in



accordance with Standing Order 3(e) shall not exceed **30** minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

- g Subject to Standing Order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than **3** minutes.
- h In accordance with Standing Order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person shall remain seated when speaking unless requested to stand by the Chair.
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chair of the meeting.
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chair of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- l **Subject to Standing Order 3(m), 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.**
- m **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- n **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.**
- o **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 (if there is one).**
- p **The Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- q **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- r **The chair of a meeting may vote on any matter put to the vote, and, where there is no majority, the chair may exercise their casting vote whether or**

- **not an original vote was submitted.**

*See Standing Orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.*

- s **During Parish Council meetings, and 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 their vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

t The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

- i. the time and place of the meeting;
- ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
- iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
- iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
- v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
- vi. if there was a public participation session; and
- vii. the resolutions made.

- u **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on the right to participate and vote on that matter.**

- v **No business may be transacted at a Parish Council 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 Parish Council meeting be less than three.**

*See Standing Order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.*

- w **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.
- 
- 
- x A meeting shall not exceed a period of **2.5** hours.

#### 4. COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES

- a **Unless the Parish Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Parish Council.**
- c **Unless the Parish Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
  - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
  - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
  - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
  - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
  - v. may, subject to Standing Orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer **7** days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
  - vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
  - vii. shall not permit a committee to appoint its own chair;
  - viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;
  - ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;

- x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
- xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend (see 3d); and
- xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

E The Parish Council may appoint informal Working Parties or groups of Parish Council members and non-councillors to a Working Group and;

- i. shall determine their terms of reference;
- ii. shall appoint Working Party members, who may be Councillors and non-Councillors. All members of a Working Group may be non-councillors unless the Parish Council determines otherwise;
- iii. shall appoint the Chair of the working party, who shall be a Member of the Parish Council;
- iv. shall brief the Working Party as to its clear definition and objectives;
- v. may dissolve a Working Party.
- vi. the Working Parties shall report to the Parish Council, shall not have power to exercise any authority, nor to incur expenditure without prior authority of the Parish Council. Decisions may only be made by the Parish Council
- vii Working Party meetings are informal and may be held anywhere, without public notice. Meetings are not open to members of the public unless individuals are expressly invited; therefore formal agenda/minutes are not required however notes shall be taken to facilitate reporting back to the Parish Council. Informal meetings of a Working Group do not need to conform to the Standing Orders within this document, however, Working Group members may choose to conform to specific Standing Orders which can be documented in the terms of reference.

## 5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office, unless emergency circumstances require a delay subject to Government legislation and advice from NALC or HALC (Hampshire Association of Local Councils).**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides, unless emergency circumstances require a delay subject to Government**

legislation and advice from NALC or HALC.

- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Parish Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Parish Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Parish Council decides.**
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Parish Council shall be the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council.**
- f **The Chair of the Council, unless they have resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**  
*It shall be the preferred practice that no person shall normally hold the office of Chair of the Council for more than three consecutive years, and no person relinquishing the Chair shall be eligible for re-election to that post during the next two years, but in exceptional circumstances, for example when no other Councillors put forward for the role.*
- g **The Vice-Chair of the Parish Council, if there is one, unless they resign or become disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chair of the Parish Council at the next annual meeting of the Parish Council.**
- h **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Parish Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chair of the Parish Council has been elected. The current Chair of the Parish Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Parish Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Parish Council has been re-elected as a member of the Parish Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chair of the Parish Council has been elected. The current Chair may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Parish Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j Following the election of the Chair of the Parish Council and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Parish Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:
  - i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Parish Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Parish Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Parish Council of their acceptance of office form unless the Parish Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**

- ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Parish Council;
- iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
- iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
- v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
- vi. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
- vii. Appointment of members to existing committees;
- viii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;
- ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
- x. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.
- xi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
- xii. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
- xiii. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
- xiv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
- xv. Review of the Parish Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
- xvi. Review of the Parish Council's complaints procedure;
- xvii. Review of the Parish Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (*see also Standing Orders 11, 20 and 21*);
- xviii. Review of the Parish Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
- xix. Review of the Parish Council's employment policies and procedures;
- xx. Review of the Parish Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.
- xxi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Parish Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the council.

6. **EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a **The Chair of the Parish Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b **If the Chair of the Parish Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chair of a committee [or a sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or the sub-committee] at any time.
- d If the chair of a committee [or a sub-committee] does not call an extraordinary meeting within **7** days of having been requested to do so by **4** members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any **4** members of the committee [or the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or a sub-committee].

7. **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 **4** councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with Standing Order 9, 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 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

8. **VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS**

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

9. **MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER**

- a 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 Parish Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Parish Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless the business to which it relates has been put on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least **7** clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with Standing Order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least **7** clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered 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 in the agenda or rejected.
- f The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

10. **MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE**

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
  - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
  - ii. to move to a vote;
  - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;



- iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
- v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
- vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
- vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
- viii. to require a written report;
- ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
- x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
- xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
- xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
- xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
- xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
- xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
- xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii. to close the meeting.

## 11. **MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION**

*See also Standing Order 20.*

- a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b **The Parish Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Parish Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
- c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

- d **Councillors, staff, the Parish Council’s contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

## 12. DRAFT MINUTES

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

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with Standing Order 10(a)(i).
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the chair 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 chair of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the **Parish Council** held on [date] in respect of **minute reference** were a correct record but this view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- e **The Parish Council will publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place. See Standing Order 20 (b).**
- f Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with Standing Order 12(e) and Standing Order 20(a) 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.

## 13. CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

*See also Standing Order 3(u).*

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Parish Council.
- b Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- c Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have another interest if so required by the Parish Council's code of conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the Parish Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required] and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
  - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
  - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
  - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
  - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to Standing Orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered at the beginning of the meeting of the Parish Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required].
- h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) 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 Parish Council's area; or**
  - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

14. **CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS**

- a Upon notification by the Winchester City Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Parish Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to tanding Order 11, report this to the Parish Council.
- b Where the notification in Standing order 14(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chair of the Parish Council of this fact, and the Chair shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Parish Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with Standing Order 14(d).
- c The Parish Council may:
  - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
  - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- d **Upon notification by Winchester City Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. **PROPER OFFICER**

- a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk, (ii) other staff member(s), (iii) a locum or (iv) a Parish Councillor nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent. Any Parish Councillor who undertakes Proper Officer duties will not be able to receive any remuneration.
- b The Proper Officer shall:
  - i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**
    - **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**

- **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Parish Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

*See Standing Order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;*

- ii. subject to Standing Order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least **7** days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it;
- iii. **convene a meeting of the Parish Council for the election of a new Chair of the Parish Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office;**
- iv. **facilitate inspection of the Minutes by local government electors;**
- v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
- vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Parish Council's relevant policies and procedures;
- ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer;
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Parish Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Parish Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;  
(*see also Standing Order 23*);
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Parish Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the Parish Council and the Parish Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the Parish Council to the [Chair

or in their absence the Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Parish Council]  
OR [Chair or in his absence Vice-Chair (if there is one) of **South  
Wonston Parish Council** within two working days of receipt to facilitate  
an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires  
consideration before the next ordinary meeting of **South Wonston  
Parish Council**;

- xvi. manage access to information about the Parish Council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) The Parish Council does not have a seal..  
(see also *Standing Order 23*).

## 16. **RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

The Clerk has been appointed Responsible Financial Officer (RFO). The Parish Council's Financial Regulations apply accordingly. The RFO acts under the policy direction of the council;

- administers the council's financial affairs in accordance with all Acts, Regulations and Proper Practices (namely the regulations issued under Sections 32, 43 (2) and 46 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014, or any superseding legislation, and then in force, unless otherwise specified ("Accounts and Audit Regulations") and the Joint Panel on Accountability and Governance Practitioners Guide 2024, published by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) for smaller authorities in England ("Proper Practices"));
- determines on behalf of the council its accounting records and control systems;
- ensures the accounting control systems are observed;
- ensures the accounting records are kept up to date;
- seeks economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of council resources;
- produces financial management information as required by the council.

The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) or a locum or a Parish Councillor to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent. Any Parish Councillor who undertakes Responsible Financial Officer duties will not be able to receive any remuneration.

## 17. **ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS**

- a All accounting procedures and financial records of the council are determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- b All payments by the Parish Council are authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, Proper Practices and the Parish Council's Financial Regulations.
- c All regular payments are recorded on the monthly Transaction Report provided by the RFO, and approved at the Parish Council monthly meeting, signed by the Chair and posted on the website.
- d The Parish Council's agreed budget, prepared for each financial year in accordance with The Local Government Finance Act 1992 or succeeding legislation, provides a basis for monitoring progress by the RFO during the year. The RFO will compare actual receipts, income and expenditure with what was planned.
- e The accounting records determined by the RFO will be sufficient to explain the council's transactions and to disclose its financial position with reasonable accuracy at any time. In particular they will contain day to day entries of all sums of money received and expended by the council and the matters to which they relate and a record of the assets and liabilities of the council. All financial details will be made available to councillors and the Parish Council.
- f The accounting records are designed to facilitate the efficient preparation of statements in the Annual (Governance and Accountability) Return (AGAR). The RFO will complete and certify the annual Accounting Statements contained in the AGAR in accordance with Proper Practices as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year. Having certified the Accounting Statements, the RFO will submit them, and any related documents, to the Parish Council within the time scales required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations for approval. The annual return is subject to external audit.

**18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT**

- a. The Parish Council has, guided by the RFO, adopted the most up to date Model Financial Regulations for Local Councils (NALC 2024), adapted to suit its size and structure. The Financial Regulations will be reviewed annually for fitness of purpose.
- b. The Parish Council will ensure that it has a sound system of internal control, which delivers effective financial, operational and risk management.
- c. The Parish Council will ensure that there is an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and internal control system in accordance with Proper Practices.

- d. The Parish Council in relation to procurement will strive to obtain value for money at all times.
  - Every contract will comply with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and no exceptions will be made except in an emergency.
  - For a contract for a supply of goods, services or works, where the estimated value will exceed the thresholds set by The Public Procurement (agreement on Government Procurement) (Thresholds) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 and Public Procurement Note 10/21, the full requirements of The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or any superseding legislation will be followed in respect of the tendering, award and notification of that contract.
  - For contracts estimated to exceed £25,000 incl. VAT, the Parish Council will seek formal tenders from at least three suppliers agreed by the council. Tenders will be invited in accordance with Financial Regulations Appendix 1.
  - The Parish Council, or any of its committees or sub-committees, is not bound to accept the lowest value tender, or any tender, quote or estimate.

#### 19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of ***South Wonston Parish Council*** is subject to Standing Order 11.
- b Subject to the Parish Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Parish Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chair of ***South Wonston Parish Council*** or, if they are not available, the vice-chair (if there is one) of ***South Wonston Parish Council*** of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to ***South Wonston Parish Council*** at its next meeting.
- c The chair of ***South Wonston Parish Council*** or in their absence, the vice-chair shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by ***South Wonston Parish Council***.
- d Subject to the Parish Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Parish Council's most senior member of staff (or other members of staff) shall contact the chair of ***South Wonston Parish Council*** or in their absence, the vice-chair of ***South Wonston Parish Council*** in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of ***South Wonston Parish Council***.



- e Subject to the Parish Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer relates to the chair or vice-chair of **South Wonston Parish Council**, this shall be communicated to another member of **South Wonston Parish Council** , which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of **South Wonston Parish Council**.
- f 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.

- g In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).

20. **RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION**

*See also Standing Order 21.*

- a **In accordance with Freedom of Information legislation, the Parish Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**
- b The gross annual income or expenditure of the Parish Council is less than £200,000 but more than £25,000. This means that the Parish Council falls between the requirements of the Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015 and the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015. Therefore, the Parish Council will regard the requirements of the Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015 as best and most suitable practice and, circumstances permitting, such as reasonable quantities or timely arrival, will try to publish information in accordance with the Smaller Authorities requirements.

21. **RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION**

(Below is not an exclusive list).

*See also Standing Order 11.*

- a **The Parish Council shall appoint a Data Protection Officer. If a suitable candidate cannot be found, the council will seek assistance with monitoring and guidance from the Hampshire Association of Local Councils.**
- b **The Parish Council shall have procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data.**
- c **The Parish Council shall have a Data Protection Policy which will be reviewed annually, kept updated and posted on the website.**
- d **The Parish 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 Parish Council shall ensure that information communicated in its Privacy Notice is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f **The Parish Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

22. **RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA**

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

23. **EXECUTION OF LEGAL DEEDS**

*See also Standing Orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvii).*

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Parish Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **Subject to Standing Order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Parish Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

24. **COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS**

- a **An invitation to attend a meeting of the Parish Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of Winchester City Council and Hampshire County Council representing the area of the Council.**
- b Unless the Parish Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to Winchester City Council and Hampshire County Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Parish Council.

25. **RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES**

- a. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:
  - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Parish Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
  - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

26. **STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY**

- 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 to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Parish Council's Standing Orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least **4** councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with Standing Order 9.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Parish Council's Standing Orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d The decision of the chair of a meeting as to the application of Standing Orders at the meeting shall be final.