

BLETSOE PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

1. Powers and Duties of the Chairman

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

2. Proper Officer

The Proper Officer of the Council is the Clerk. The Responsible Financial Officer of the Council is the Clerk. Other duties and responsibilities of the Clerk are as laid down in the Conditions of Service Contract and Job Description. Notwithstanding those duties and responsibilities, it shall be the duty of the Clerk to advise Members on the content and interpretation of these Standing Orders.

3. Quorum

Three Members shall constitute a quorum. If a quorum is not present when the Council meets or if during a meeting the number of Members, for whatever reason, falls below the quorum, the business not transacted at that meeting shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Chairman may decide.

4. Voting

Members shall vote by show of hands unless the meeting decides otherwise.

If the meeting so requires, the Clerk shall record the names of the Members who voted on any question and how they voted.

The Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote and, in the case of equality of votes, may give a casting vote, whether or not an original vote was given.

5. Order of Business

The order of business shall be stated on an agenda paper which shall be delivered to each Member at least three working days prior to the date of the meeting along with the summons convening the meeting.

6. Resolutions Moved on Notice

Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no resolution may be moved unless the business to which it relates has been included on the Agenda.

Members may request an item or notice of resolution on the Agenda by giving the Clerk written notice of the item or resolution at least seven working days prior to the meeting to which that agenda relates.

Every resolution, amendment or recommendation shall be relevant to some subject over which the Council has the power or which affects its area.

7. Resolutions Moved Without Notice

Resolutions on procedural matters may be moved without notice including those to vary the order of business on grounds of urgency or procedural efficiency. Such resolutions shall be put to the vote without discussion.

8. Rules of Debate

All remarks shall be addressed to the Chairman.

No discussion shall take place on the minutes of previous meetings except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialled by the Chairman.

A Member shall, except at the discretion of the Chairman, only be entitled to speak once on any motion or amendment.

A Member shall direct comments to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a point of order.

The mover of a resolution shall have the right of reply time permitted at the discretion of the Chairman.

The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of an item shall not be discussed.

Public Open session shall last no more than 15 minutes

A representative of the local Constabulary shall be allowed to speak at Council meetings at the discretion of the Chairman.

9. Local and Pecuniary Interests

Where you have a local and / or disclosable pecuniary interest in any business of the Council and you attend a meeting of the Council at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

Unless 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.

Unless 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 Council's Code of Conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest

Members are responsible for their own disclosures and must act in accordance with any advice given by the monitoring officer

10. Recording of meetings by members of the council, press or general public

A person may not orally report about a meeting as it takes place if he is present at the meeting of a parish council or its committees but otherwise may:

- a) film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting
- b) use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later;
- c) report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting.

11. Closure

A motion of closure of a debate may be moved at any time but must be proposed and seconded without comment. The Chairman may refuse such motion if he feels that the question before the Council has not been sufficiently debated.

12. Confidential Business

No Member of the Council shall disclose to any person, not being a Member of the Council, any business declared to be confidential by the Council.

13. Borough Councillors

Borough Councillors who are not also Parish Councillors shall be invited to attend meetings and shall be sent copies of agendas, minutes and other relevant documentation. They may be allowed to speak at the discretion of the Chairman.

14. Length of Meetings

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

15. Suspension of Standing Orders

These Standing Orders may be suspended at any time and for any period of time by resolution.

16. Standing Orders to be Given to Members

A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to all Members.

17. Interpretation

In these Standing Orders words importing one gender shall include all genders and the singular includes the plural and vice versa.

Revised 21 May 2015
Reviewed May 2016
Reviewed March 2017