



STANDING ORDERS

MEETINGS

1. Meetings of the Council shall commence at 19:00 and end no later than 20:30 on the second Tuesday of each month unless the Council otherwise decides at a previous meeting, except during August when the Council is in recess.
2. **The Statutory Annual Meeting (a) in an election year shall be held on the Tuesday next following the fourth day after the ordinary day of elections to the Council and (b) in a year which is not an election year shall be held on the second Tuesday in May.**
3. **Any additional meetings shall be held on dates and times to be agreed, as and when necessary.**
4. **Smoking is not permitted at any meeting of the Council.**

CHAIRMAN OF MEETING

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

PROPER OFFICER

6. Where a statute, regulation or order confers functions or duties on the proper officer of the Council in the following cases, he/she shall be the Clerk:
 - a) To receive declarations of acceptance of office.
 - b) To receive and record notices disclosing interests at meetings.
 - c) To receive and retain plans and documents.
 - d) To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council.
 - e) To receive copies of byelaws made by a District Council.
 - f) To certify copies of byelaws made by the Council.
 - g) To sign and issue summonses to attend meetings of the Council.
 - h) To keep proper records for all Council meetings.

Adopted: June 2013

QUORUM

- 7. Three Members shall constitute a quorum.**
- 8. If a quorum is not present when the Council meets or if during a meeting the number of Councillors present 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 fix.**

VOTING

- 9. Members shall vote by show of hands, or, if at least two Members so request, by signed ballot.**
- 10. If a Member so requires, the Clerk shall record the names of the Members who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it. Such a request must be made before moving on to the next business.**
- 11. (1) Subject to (2) and (3) 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/she gave no original vote.**
 - (2) If the 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/she may not give an original vote in an election for Chairman.**
 - (3) The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Chairman.**

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 12. In an election year Councillors should execute Declarations of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the proper officer of the Council to take such declaration, before the Annual Meeting commences and to decide when any declarations of acceptance of office which have not been received as provided by law shall be received.**
- 13. At each Annual Meeting the first business shall be to:**
 - 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) To elect a Vice-Chairman.**

- d) To appoint representatives to outside bodies.
 - e) To appoint Committees and Sub-Committees.
 - f) To consider the payment of any subscriptions falling to be paid annually.
14. **At every meeting other than the Annual Parish 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) and undertaking to observe the Council's Code of Conduct as are required by law to be made or, if not then received, to decide when they shall be received.**
15. After the first business has been completed, the order of business, unless the Council otherwise decides on the ground of urgency, shall be as follows:
- a) To read and consider the Minutes: that if a copy has been circulated to each Member not later than the day of issue of the summons to attend the meeting, the Minutes may be taken as read.
 - b) **After consideration to approve the signature of the Minutes by the presiding Chairman as a correct record.**
 - c) **To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.**
 - d) To receive such communications as the presiding Chairman may wish to lay before the Council.
 - e) To hear questions, comments or representations from parishioners for a period of 10 minutes, additional time shall be permitted at the discretion of the Chairman. Please refer to the Council's Public Participation Procedure for further guidance. All matters arising shall either be placed on agenda for discussion at the next meeting, or to be dealt with by the Clerk, or to be noted.
 - f) To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
 - g) To receive and consider reports and minutes of Committees.
 - h) To consider motions or recommendations in the order in which they have been notified.
 - i) Any other business specified in the summons.
16. A motion to vary the order of business on the ground of urgency
- a) may be proposed by the Chairman or by any Member and, if approved by the Chairman, may be put to the vote without being seconded, and
 - b) shall be put to the vote without discussion.

RESOLUTIONS MOVED ON NOTICE

17. Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no resolution may be moved unless the mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Clerk at least eight clear days not later than Sunday in the week before the next meeting of the Council.

18. The Clerk shall date every notice of motion or recommendation when received by him/her, shall number each notice in the order in which it was received and shall enter it in a book which shall be open to the inspection of every Member of the Council.
19. The Clerk shall insert in the summons for every meeting all notices of motion or recommendation properly given in the order in which they have been received unless the Member giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that he/she intends to move at some later meeting or that he/she withdraws it.
20. If a resolution or recommendation specified in the summons be not moved, it shall, unless postponed by the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.
21. Every resolution or recommendation shall be relevant to some question over which the Council has power or which affects its area.

RESOLUTIONS MOVED WITHOUT NOTICE

22. Resolutions dealing with the following matters may be moved without notice:
 - a) To appoint a Chairman of the meeting.
 - b) To correct the Minutes.
 - c) To approve the Minutes.
 - d) To alter the order of business.
 - e) To proceed to the next business.
 - f) To close or adjourn the debate.
 - g) To appoint a Committee or any Members thereof.
 - h) To adopt a report.
 - i) To authorise the sealing of documents.
 - j) To amend a motion.
 - k) To give leave to withdraw a motion or an amendment.
 - l) To extend the time limit for speeches.
 - m) To exclude the press and public.
 - n) To silence or eject from the meeting a Member named for misconduct.
 - o) To give the consent of the Council where such consent is required by these Standing Orders.
 - p) To suspend Standing Order.
 - q) To adjourn the meeting.

QUESTIONS

23. A Member may ask the Chairman or Clerk any question concerning the business of the Council.
24. No question not connected with business under discussion shall be asked except during the part of the meeting set aside for questions.

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

RULES OF DEBATE

27. No discussion shall take place upon the Minutes except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialled by the Chairman.
28.
 - a) A resolution or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded, and unless proper notice has already been given, it shall, if required by the Chairman, be reduced to writing and handed to him before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.
 - b) A Member when seconding a resolution or amendment may, if he/she then declare his/her intention to do so, reserve his/her speech until a later period of debate.
 - c) A Member shall direct his/her speech to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a question of order.
 - d) No speech shall exceed ten minutes, except by consent of the Council.
 - e) An amendment shall be either:
 - (i) To leave out words.
 - (ii) To leave out words and insert or add others.
 - (iii) To insert or add words.
 - f) An amendment shall not have the effect of negating the motion before the Council.
 - g) If an amendment be carried, the resolution, as amended, shall take the place of the original resolution and shall become the resolution upon which any further amendment may be moved.
 - h) A further amendment shall not be moved until the Council has disposed of every amendment previously moved.
 - i) The mover of a resolution or of an amendment shall have a right of reply.
 - j) A Member, other than the mover of a resolution, shall not, without leave of the Council, speak more than once on any resolution except to move an amendment or further amendment, or on an amendment, or on a point of order, or in personal explanation, or to move the closure.
 - k) A Member may wish to make a point of order or a personal explanation. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by him/her which may have been misunderstood. A Member rising for these purposes shall be heard forthwith.
 - l) A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the unanimous consent of the Council, which shall be signified without discussion, and no Member may speak upon it after permission has been asked for its withdrawal unless such permission had been refused.

- m) When a resolution is under debate no other resolution shall be moved except the following:
 - i) To amend the resolution.
 - ii) To proceed to the next business.
 - iii) To adjourn the debate.
 - iv) That the question be now put.
 - v) That a Member names be not further heard.
 - vi) That a Member named leave the meeting.
 - vii) That the resolution be referred to a committee.
 - viii) To exclude the public and press.
 - ix) To adjourn the meeting.
- 29.
 - a) The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.
 - b) Members shall address the Chairman.
 - c) If two or more Members wish to speak the Chairman shall call upon one of them to speak first.
 - d) Whenever the Chairman speaks during a debate all other Members shall be silent.

CLOSURE

- 30. At the end of any speech a Member may, without comment, move “that the question be now put”, “that the debate be now adjourned” or “that the Council do not adjourn”. If such motion is seconded and if the Chairman is of the opinion that the question before the Council has been sufficiently debated (but not otherwise), he/she shall forthwith put the motion. If the motion “that the question be not put” is carried, he/she shall call upon the mover to exercise or waive his/her right of reply and shall put the question immediately after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the Council shall not prejudice the mover’s right of reply at the resumption.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

- 31.
 - a) **All Members must observe the Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 14 May 2013.**
 - b) No Member shall misconduct himself/herself at a meeting by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chairman, by wilfully obstructing business, or by behaving irregularly, offensively, improperly or **in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.**
 - c) If, in the opinion of the Chairman, a Member has broken the provisions of paragraph (b) of this Order, the Chairman shall express that opinion to the Council and thereafter any Member may move that the Member named be no longer heard or that the Member named do leave the meeting, and the motion, if

seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion. **If a Member reasonably believes another Member is in breach of the Code of Conduct, that Member is under a duty to report the breach to Durham County Council's Monitoring Officer.**

- d) If either of the motions mentioned in paragraph c) is disobeyed, the Chairman may suspend the meeting or take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce them.

RIGHT OF REPLY

- 32. The mover of a resolution shall have a right of reply immediately before the resolution is put to the vote. If an amendment is proposed the mover of the amendment shall be entitled to reply immediately before the amendment is put to the vote. A Member exercising a right of reply shall not introduce new matter. After the right of reply has been exercised or waived, a vote shall be taken without further discussion.

ALTERATION OF RESOLUTION

- 33. A Member may, with the consent of his/her seconder, move amendments to his/her own resolution.

RESCISSION OF PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

- 34.
 - a) A decision (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within six months save by a special resolution, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least three Members of the Council.
 - b) When a special resolution has been disposed of, no similar resolution may be moved within a further six months.

VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

- 35. Where more than two persons have been nominated for any position to be filled by the Council and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken, and so on until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.

DISCUSSIONS AND RESOLUTIONS AFFECTING EMPLOYEES OF THE COUNCIL

- 36. If at a meeting there arises any question relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service, of any person employed by the Council, it shall not be considered until the Council has decided whether or not the public shall be excluded.

RESOLUTIONS ON EXPENDITURE

37. Any resolution which, if carried, would, in the opinion of the Chairman, substantially increase the expenditure upon any service which would involve capital expenditure, shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

EXPENDITURE

38. **Orders for the payment of money shall be authorised by resolution of the Council and signed by two Members.**
39. **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, sub-committee or to an employee.**

SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

40. A document shall not be sealed on behalf of the Council unless its sealing has been authorised by a resolution.

COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

41. The Council may at the Annual Meeting appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as are necessary, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf:
- a) shall not appoint any member of a committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting, and
 - b) may appoint persons other than Members of the Council to any Committee; and
 - c) may subject to the provisions of Order 34 above at any time dissolve or alter the membership of a committee.
42. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman, ex-officio, shall be voting Members of every Committee.
43. Every Committee shall at its first meeting before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chairman and may elect a Vice-Chairman who shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Council, and shall settle its programme of meetings for the year.

SPECIAL MEETING

44. The Chairman of a Committee or the Chairman of the Council may summon an additional meeting of that Committee at any time. An additional meeting shall also be summoned on the requisition in writing

of not less than a quarter of the Members of the Committee. The summons shall set out the business to be considered at the special meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.

ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

45. a) Except as provided in paragraph b) of this Standing Order or by statute, all accounts for payment and claims upon the Council shall be laid before the Council.
- b) Where it is necessary to make a payment before it has been authorised by the Council, such payment shall be certified as to its correctness and urgency by the appropriate officer. Such payment shall be authorised by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.
- c) All payments authorised under sub-paragraph b) of this Standing Order or made without authority of the Council shall be separately included in the next schedule of payments laid before the Council.
46. The Clerk shall supply to each Member a statement of receipts and payments of the previous financial year no later than the Annual Meeting in May.

FINANCIAL MATTERS:

47. The Council shall consider and approve Financial Regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer.

Such Regulations shall include detailed arrangements for the following:

- a) the accounting records and systems of internal control;
- b) the assessment and management of risks faced by the Council;
- c) the work of the Internal Auditor and the receipt of regular reports from the Internal Auditor which shall be required at least annually;
- d) the financial reporting requirements of Members and local electors.
48. The Financial Responsible Officer (Clerk) is required to call an Annual Precept Meeting, to discuss the Parish Precept for the coming Financial Year, this must be done prior to the end of January.
49. The Financial Responsible Officer (Clerk) shall draft an Annual Budget for the coming Financial Year, to which it must be approved at a special meeting before implementation.

ESTIMATES

50. The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting in the month of December.

INTERESTS

- 51. If a Member has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 13th May, 2008 then he/she shall declare such interest as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the existence and nature of that interest as required.**
- 52. If a Member who has declared a personal interest then considers the interest to be prejudicial, he/she must withdraw from the room or chamber during consideration of the item to which the interest relates.**
- 53. The Clerk may be required to compile and hold a register of Member's interests in accordance with agreement reached with the Monitoring Officer of the Responsible Authority and/or as required by statute.**

CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY MEMBERS

54.
 - a) Canvassing of Members, directly or indirectly, for any appointment under the Council shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Clerk shall make known the purpose of this sub-paragraph of this Standing Order to every candidate.
 - b) A Member of the Council shall not solicit for any person any appointment under the Council or recommend any person for such appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, a Member may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.

INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

55. A Member may for the purpose of his duty as such (but not otherwise), inspect any document in possession of the Council, and if copies are available shall, on request, be supplied for the like purpose with a copy.
- 56. All Minutes kept by the Council shall be open for the inspection of any Member of the Council.**

UNAUTHORISED ACTIVITIES

57. No Member of the Council shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council
 - a) Inspect any lands or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - b) issue orders, instructions or directions.Unless authorised to do so by the Council.

ADMISSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS TO MEETINGS

58. **The public and the press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council, which may, however, temporarily exclude the public or the press or both** by means of the following resolution, viz:

“That in view of the [special] [confidential] nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.”

(Note: The special reasons should be stated. If a person’s advice or assistance is needed they may be invited (by name) to remain after the exclusion resolution is passed.)

59. The Clerk shall afford to the press reasonable facilities for taking their report of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present. There shall be no audio or video recording or photographs of the meeting without the express approval of the Council.
60. If a Member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chairman may, after warning, order that he/she be removed from the Meeting and may adjourn the meeting for such period as is necessary to restore order.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

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

LIAISON WITH COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

62. A summons and agenda for each meeting shall be sent together with an invitation to attend to the County Councillor for the Division and to the District Councillors for the Ward.
63. Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter ordered to be sent to the County or District Council shall be transmitted to the County Councillor for the Division or to the District Councillor for the Ward as the case may require.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

64. The Clerk shall refer every relevant planning application to each Member.

CODE OF CONDUCT ON COMPLAINTS

65. The Council shall deal with complaints of maladministration allegedly committed by the Council or by any officer or Member in the manner as adopted by the Council except for those complaints which should be properly directed to Durham County Council's Monitoring Officer for consideration.

VARIATION, REVOCATION AND SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

66. Any or every part of the Standing Orders except those printed in **bold type** may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.
67. A resolution permanently to add, vary, or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

STANDING ORDERS TO BE GIVEN TO MEMBERS

68. A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each Member by the Clerk upon delivery to him/her of the Member's declaration of acceptance of office.