

1 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. When calculating the 3 clear days for notice of a meeting to councillors and the public, the day on which the notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning shall not count.
- c. Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by resolution which shall give reason for the public's exclusion.
- d. Subject to standing order 1(c) above, members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business on the agenda.
- e. The period of time is 15 minutes or at the Chairman's discretion.
- f. Subject to standing order 1(e) above, each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 2 minutes.
- g. In accordance with standing order 1(d) above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate.
- h. In accordance with standing order 1(g) above, the Chairman may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to the Clerk for a written or oral response.
- i. A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- j. A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak.
- k. Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Chairman.
- l. Only one person to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chairman shall direct the order of speaking.
- m. In accordance with standing order 1(c) above, the press shall be provided reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.
- n. Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman may be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman.
- o. The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman, if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.
- p. Subject to standing order 1(v) below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.
- q. The Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote. (*See also standing orders 2(h) and (i) below.*)
- r. Voting on any question shall be by a show of hands unless otherwise decided for any special reason. 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.
- s. The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors in respect of the entire meeting.

- t. **An interest arising from the code of conduct adopted by the Council, the nature of which is required to be disclosed by a Councillor at a meeting shall be recorded in the minutes. (See also standing order 7 below)**
- u. **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than 3.**
- v. **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be adjourned.**
- w. **Meetings shall not exceed a period of two hours subject to the Chairman's discretion.**

2 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 new councillors elected take office.**
- b. **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.**
- c. **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d. **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.**
- e. **The election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.**
- f. **The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g. **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h. **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i. **In an election year, if the current chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j. **Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows.**
 - 1 **In an election year, delivery by councillors of their declarations of acceptance of office.**
 - 2 **Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council and to receive and note minutes of and/or to determine recommendations made by committees.**
 - 3 **Accept the minutes of the last meeting of the Council and note recommendations made in those minutes.**
 - 4 **Receipt of nominations to existing committees and working parties.**
 - 5 **Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations.**
 - 6 **Review and representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back.**

- 7 Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment.
- 8 Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.
- 9 Review of the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies.
- 10 Establishing or reviewing the Council's complaints procedure.
- 11 Establishing or reviewing the Council's procedure for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 12 Establishing or reviewing the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media.
- 13 Setting the dates, times and places of ordinary meetings of the full Council for the year ahead.

3 Proper Officer

- a. The Council's Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or such other employee as may be nominated by the Council from time to time or (ii) such other employee appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence. The Proper Officer and the employee appointed to act as such during the Proper Officer's absence shall fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer in standing orders.
- b. The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following.
 - i. **Sign and serve on Councillors by delivery or post at their residences** or by email containing the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer, confirming the time, date, venue and agenda of a meeting of the Council or Planning Committee at least 3 clear days before the meeting.
 - ii. **Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or Planning Committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them)**
 - iii. Subject to standing orders 4(a)–(e) below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least seven days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it.
 - iv. **Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office, in accordance with standing order 3(b)i above**
 - v. Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.
 - vi. **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
 - vii. **Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.**
 - viii. Retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
 - ix. Keep proper records required before and after meetings
 - x. Process all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the Council's procedures relating to the same.
 - xi. Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.
 - xii. Manage the organisation, storage of and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form.
 - xiii. Arrange for legal deeds to be signed by 2 councillors and witnessed.
 - xiv. Arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's financial regulations

- xv. Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose.
- xvi. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders.

4 Motions requiring written notice

- a. In accordance with standing order 3(b)(iii) above, no motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Council's Proper Officer at least seven clear days before the next meeting.
- b. The Proper Officer may, before including a motion in the agenda received in accordance with standing order 4(a) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- c. If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 4(a) above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer in clear and certain language at least five clear days before the meeting.
- d. If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included or rejected in the agenda.
- e. Having consulted the Chairman or councillors pursuant to standing order 4(d) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
- f. Notice of every motion received in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be numbered in the order received and shall be entered in a book, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
- g. Every motion rejected in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be duly recorded with a note by the Proper Officer giving reasons for its rejection in a book for that purpose, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
- h. Every motion and resolution shall relate to the Council's statutory functions, powers and lawful obligations or shall relate to an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

5 Motions not requiring written notice

- a. Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice.
 1. To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
 2. To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
 3. To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
 4. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
 5. To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
 6. To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
 7. To close or adjourn debate.
 8. To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub committee or an employee.
 9. To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any councillors (including substitutes) thereto.
 10. To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
 11. To dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
 12. To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee.
 13. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub-committee or an employee.

14. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
 15. To authorise legal deeds signed by two councillors and witnessed.
 16. To authorise the payment of monies up to £250.
 17. To amend a motion
 18. To extend the time limit for speeches.
 19. To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
 20. To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
 21. To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders.
 22. **To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law.**
 23. To adjourn the meeting.
 24. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
 25. To answer questions from councillors.
- b** If a motion falls within the terms of reference of a committee or sub-committee or within the delegated powers conferred on an employee, a referral of the same may be made to such committee or sub-committee or employee provided that the Chairman may direct for it to be dealt with at the present meeting for reasons of urgency or expedience.

6 Rules of debate

- a.** Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chairman's direction for reasons of expedience.
- b.** Subject to standing orders 4(a)–(e) above, a motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- c.** 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 silent or for him 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;
 - ix. to suspend any standing order, except those which are mandatory.
- d.** In respect of standing order 6(c)(iv) above, the Chairman shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote.

7 Code of conduct

- a** **All councillors shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.**
- b** **Councillors with a prejudicial interest in relation to any item of business being transacted at a meeting may (i) make representations, (ii) answer questions and (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted but must, thereafter, leave the room or chamber.**

8 Minutes

- a. If a copy of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting has been circulated to councillors no later than the day of service of the summons to attend the scheduled meeting they shall be taken as read.
- b. No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the minutes shall be raised in accordance with standing order 5(a)(4) above.
- c. Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, 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 majority of the () and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings."
- e. Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, any previous draft minutes or recordings of the meeting shall be destroyed.

9 Disorderly conduct

- a. No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly.
- b. If, in the opinion of the Chairman, there has been a breach of standing order 9(a) above, the Chairman shall express that opinion and thereafter any councillor (including the Chairman) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.
- c. If a resolution made in accordance with standing order 9(b) above, is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or he may adjourn the meeting.

10 Rescission of previous resolutions

- a. A decision (whether positive or negative) of the Parish Council shall not be reversed within six months save by a special resolution carried by two thirds majority of those present and voting.
- b. When a special resolution has been disposed of no similar resolution may be moved within a further six months.

11 Voting on appointments

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

12 Expenditure

1. Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
2. **The Council's financial regulations shall be reviewed once a year.**
3. **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.**

13 Execution and sealing of legal deeds

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

[In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 13(1) above, any two members of the Council, may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.]

14 Committees and working parties

- a The Council may, at its annual meeting, appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. may permit committees to determine the dates of their meetings;
 - iii. shall appoint and determine the term of office of councillor or non-councillor members of such a committee (unless the appointment of non-councillors is prohibited by law) so as to hold office no later than the next annual meeting.

15 Extraordinary meetings

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

16 Advisory committees

- a. The Council may appoint advisory committees comprised of a number of councillors and non-councillors.
- b. Advisory committees and any sub-committees may consist wholly of persons who are non-councillors.

17 Accounts and Financial Statement

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

18 Estimates/Precepts

The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of January.

19 Inspection of documents

Subject to standing orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a councillor may, for the purpose of his official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee or a sub-committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its committees or sub-committees shall be available for inspection by councillors.

20 Unauthorised activities

Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee:

- a. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
- b. issue orders, instructions or directions.

21 Confidential business

- a. Councillors and employees shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware is of a confidential nature.
- b. A councillor in breach of the provisions of standing order 21(a) above may be removed from a committee or a sub-committee by a resolution of the Council.

22 Matters affecting council employees

- a. Such matters are determined by contracts of employment.
- b. The Council shall keep written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected.

23 Freedom of Information Act 2000

- a. All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- b. Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer of the Council including exercising the powers of the Proper Officer in respect of Freedom of Information requests as set out in the Council's Freedom of Information policy.

24 Relations with the press/media

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

25 Liaison with District and County Councillors

- a. An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillor of the District and County or Unitary County Council representing its electoral ward.
- b. Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter sent to the District or County or Unitary Council shall be sent to the District or County or Unitary Council councillor representing its electoral ward.

26 Financial matters

- a. **Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £250 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in standing order 26(b) below.**
- b. Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:
 - i. a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. Notices shall also be posted to no fewer than two tradesmen who may be interested in providing such goods or materials or executing the works as it thinks fit.
 - iii. tenders are to be sent, in a sealed marked envelope, to the Proper Officer by a stated date and time;
 - iv. tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of Council or Committee.
 - v. Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.
- c. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed £138,893 (or other threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time) the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No.5, as amended) and the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No. 6, as amended) apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with EU procurement rules.**

27 Allegations of breaches of the code of conduct

Are dealt with by Rother District Council.

28 Variation, revocation and suspension of standing orders

- a** Any or every part of the standing orders, except those which are mandatory by law, may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.
- b** A motion to permanently add to or to vary or to revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders not mandatory by law shall not be carried unless two-thirds of the councillors at a meeting of the Council vote in favour of the same.

29 Standing orders to be given to councillors

- a** The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor upon delivery of his declaration of acceptance of office.
- b** The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.
- c** A councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than 3 times in one meeting may result in him being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.