

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

Adopted by Council 6.05.14. Revised secⁿ 3 k 12.05.15. Revised secⁿ 18 3.05.16. Revised 04.09.18 in line with NALC's amended changes. Revised s3(r) and new s 1t.05.02.19 Revised and updated sections 18c & 18f 4.4.2023 Added section 3w 18.4.2024

Standing Orders

INTRODUCTION

How to use standing orders

These standing orders are based on the model in the publication 'Local Councils Explained' published in 2013 by NALC.

Standing orders are the written rules of a local council. They are used to confirm a council's internal organisational, administrative and procurement procedures and procedural matters for meetings. They are not the same as the policies of a council but they may refer to them. A local council must have standing orders for the procurement of contracts.

Meetings of a full council, councillors, the Responsible Financial Officer and Proper Officer are subject to many statutory requirements. A council should have standing orders to confirm those statutory requirements. A council should have standing orders to control the number, place, quorum, notices and other procedures for committee meetings because these are subject to fewer statutory requirements. If it does not, committees may adopt their own standing orders.

Standing orders that are in bold type contain statutory requirements. It is recommended that councils adopt them without changing them. Other standing orders not in bold are designed to help councils operate effectively but do not contain statutory requirements so they may be adopted as drafted or amended to suit a council's needs. For convenience, the word "councillor" is used in standing orders and includes a non-councillor with or without voting rights unless otherwise stated.

The 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 Responsible Financial Officer.

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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| | page |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Rules of debate at meetings | 3 |
| 2. Disorderly conduct at meetings | 4 |
| 3. Meetings generally | 5 |
| 4. Committees and working parties | 7 |
| 5. Ordinary council meetings | 8 |
| 6. Extraordinary meetings of the Council and committees | 10 |
| 7. Previous resolutions | 11 |
| 8. Voting on appointments | 11 |
| 9. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer | 11 |
| 10. Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice | 12 |
| 11. Handling confidential or sensitive information | 13 |
| 12. Draft minutes | 13 |
| 13. Code of conduct and dispensations | 13 |
| 14. Code of conduct complaints | 15 |
| 15. Proper Officer | 15 |
| 16. Responsible Financial Officer | 17 |
| 17. Accounts and accounting statements | 17 |
| 18. Financial controls and procurement | 18 |
| 19. Handling staff matters | 19 |
| 20. Requests for information | 20 |
| 21. Relations with the press/media | 20 |
| 22. Execution and sealing of legal deeds | 20 |
| 23. Communicating with district councillors | 21 |
| 24. Restrictions on councillor activities | 21 |
| 25. Standing orders generally | 21 |

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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STANDING ORDERS

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 chairman 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 is carried, the original motion, as amended, shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless notice of it is given before or at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his/her 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.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k) below, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairman 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 unless allowed by the chairman.

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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- 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 of 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 chairman 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 he/she last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. in exercise of a right of reply.

- p During the debate of 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 he/she considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he/she is concerned by.

- q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his/her 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 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 requirements.

- s Any original or substantive motion shall be put to the vote once the chairman of the meeting is satisfied it has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his/her 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 5 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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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 chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or 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) above is ignored, the chairman 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








- a Meetings of the council will ordinarily be held in the Village Hall, School Lane, Walton at 7.00pm on the first Tuesday of each month except August unless the council determines otherwise. **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 full council 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 committee 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.** Public notice will not be given for meetings of the staffing committee by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.
- ▲ ■ 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**

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the public's exclusion.

Members of the public do not have a right to attend a meeting of the staffing committee by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

- 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.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) above shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- g Subject to standing order 3(f) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes per item and for no longer than 10 minutes in total.
- h In accordance with standing order 3(e) above, a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his/her comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- j Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
-   k Subject to standing order 3(l), 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.
-   l A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.
-   m **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.**
-  n **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/her absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if any).**

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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- o **The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman of the Council 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 a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors or councillors with voting rights present and voting.**

- ▲ ■ q **The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his/her casting vote whether or not he/she gave an original vote.**
See standing orders 5(h) and (i) below for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.

- r All questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors with voting rights present and voting. **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on any question shall be by a show of hands.** In the case of a co-option to Council, the vote will be taken by signed ballot. **At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question, other than in the case of co-option to the Council, shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his/her 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 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 present and those who have tendered an apology for absence;
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - iv. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
 - v. if there was a public participation session; and
 - vi. the resolutions made.

- ▲ ■ t **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 his/her right to participate and vote on that matter.**

- u **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least 5 (five) members of the Council are present.**
See standing order 4d(vi) below for the quorum of a committee meeting.

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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- v **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.
- w Full Council meetings shall commence at 7pm. A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2.5 hours. If approved by all members present at the meeting, the Standing Orders may be suspended for an additional 15 minutes only.

4. Committees and working parties

- a Walton Parish Council customarily makes decisions at meetings of the full Council. It has created a Staffing Committee to deal with staffing matters. The Staffing Committee does not delegate to a sub-committee and so there is no reference to sub-committees included in these standing orders. Working Parties of councillors may be set up from time to time with appropriate terms of reference in order to advise and/or make recommendations for action by the full Council.
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees, other committees or working parties 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 full Council;
 - iii. shall permit a committee or working party to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c) above, appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee or working party;
 - v. shall permit a committee or working party to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee or working party;
 - vi. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee which shall be no less than three;
 - vii. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
 - viii. in conformity with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s 1(2), meetings of the Staffing Committee will exclude the Public and Press

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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in view of the confidential nature of the business concerned.

- ix. may dissolve a committee or a working party.

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 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 7pm.
- d In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.
- e The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.
- f The Chairman of the Council, unless he/she has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his/her successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- g The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless he/she 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/she shall preside at the annual 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/she shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He/she 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

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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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 business of the annual meeting shall include:
- i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his/her acceptance of office form unless the 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 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, staff and other local authorities;
 - vi. Appointment of members to existing committees and working parties;
 - vii. Appointment of any new committees and working parties in accordance with standing order 4 above;
 - viii. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
 - ix. 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;
- k At an ordinary meeting of the Council, and at intervals determined by the Council, carry out the following:
- i. Review of the terms of reference for committees and working parties annually.
 - ii. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
 - iii. Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment annually in February or March;
 - iv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks annually in February or March;
 - v. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
 - vi. Review of the Council's complaints procedure;
 - vii. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;
 - viii. Review of the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018;
 - ix. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
 - x. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council each calendar year.

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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6. Extraordinary meetings of the Council and committees

- 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 seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chairman of a committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee at any time.

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 2 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9 below, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within 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 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 chairman of the meeting.

9. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 8 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) above, 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) 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 so that it can be understood at least 6 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 Subject to standing order 9(e) above, 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 in a book for that purpose and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded in a book for that purpose with an explanation by the Proper Officer for their 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 working party;
 - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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- 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 working party and its members;
- x. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
- xi. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
- xii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
- xiii. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
- xiv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory requirements);
- xv. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvi. to close a meeting.

11. Management of Information

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

12. Draft minutes

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
- 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

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draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i) above.

- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he/she 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/her view was not upheld by the meeting 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, 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(s) above.

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless he/she has 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 he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He/she may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he/she had the interest.
- c Unless he/she has 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 he/she has another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. He/she may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he/she 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 earliest opportunity before consideration of the item for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the Council or committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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- 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) above, dispensations requests shall be considered at the earliest opportunity after the beginning of the meeting of the Council or committee for which the dispensation is required.

- h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:**
 - 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 or**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

14. Code of conduct complaints

- a Upon notification by Wakefield Metropolitan District Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11 above, report this to the Council.

- b Where the notification in standing order 14(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman 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 Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d) below.

- c The Council may:
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

Adopted by Council 6.05.14. Revised secⁿ 3 k 12.05.15. Revised secⁿ 18 3.05.16. Revised 04.09.18 in line with NALC's amended changes. Revised s3(r) and new s 1t.05.02.19 Revised and updated sections 18c & 18f 4.4.2023 Added section 3w 18.4.2024

- d **Upon notification by the District or Unitary 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 him/her. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. Proper Officer

- a The Proper Officer shall be the Clerk. In the absence or unavailability of the Clerk, the Council shall have the power to engage the services of some other person to fulfil the role.
- b The Proper Officer shall:
- i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council and a 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**
 - ii. **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them);**
See standing order 3(b) above for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) above for a meeting of a committee.
 - iii. subject to standing order 9 above, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 5 days before the meeting confirming his/her 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/her office;**
 - v. make the minutes of meetings available for inspection;
 - vi. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
 - vii. retain acceptance of office forms from councillors;
 - viii. submit a copy of each councillor's register of interests to the WMDC Monitoring Officer;
 - ix. assist with responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the Council's policies and procedures relating to the same;
 - x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

Adopted by Council **6.05.14**. Revised secⁿ 3 k **12.05.15**. Revised secⁿ 18 **3.05.16**. Revised 04.09.18 in line with NALC's amended changes. Revised s3(r) and new s 1t.05.02.19 Revised and updated sections 18c & 18f 4.4.2023 Added section 3w 18.4.2024

- xi. keep proper records required before and after meetings;
- xii. manage the organisation, storage of, access to and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form;
- xiii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
See also standing order 22 below.
- xiv. arrange or manage 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 file for such purpose.
- xvi. refer to the Planning Working Party a planning application that is notified to the Council in time for consideration at the next full Council meeting. If a response is required by WMDC Planning Department before the date of the next full Council meeting, firstly, seek acceptance of a later response by WMDC and, secondly, if this is not possible and in the view of the Clerk (in discussion with the Chairman) the application is of sufficient significance, summon an extra ordinary meeting of the Council to consider the application.
- xvii. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme;
- xviii. action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in Standing Orders.

16. Responsible Financial Officer

- a The Responsible Financial Officer shall be the Clerk. In the absence or unavailability of the Clerk, the Council shall have the power to engage the services of some other person to fulfil the role.

17. Accounts and accounting statements

- a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of 'Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide'.
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after each month a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments and state at each council meeting the balances shown in the accounts at the end of the previous month.

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

Adopted by Council **6.05.14**. Revised secⁿ 3 k **12.05.15**. Revised secⁿ 18 **3.05.16**. Revised 04.09.18 in line with NALC's amended changes. Revised s3(r) and new s 1t.05.02.19 Revised and updated sections 18c & 18f 4.4.2023 Added section 3w 18.4.2024

- d At least three times each year, and at intervals not exceeding five months, the Responsible Financial Officer shall supply a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments for the year to date in comparison with the budget for the financial year.
- e As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31st March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments for the year to date for information; and
 - ii. to the full Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- f The year end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and applying the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31st March. A completed draft annual return shall be presented to each councillor before the end of the following month of May. The annual return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to Council for consideration and formal approval before 30th June.

18. 'Financial controls and procurement

- a The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. procurement policies for contracts of all levels (subject to standing order 18(c) below) and requirements under the Public Contract Regulations 2015.
- b Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least every three years for fitness of purpose.
- c A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £30,000 but less than the relevant thresholds referred to in standing order 18(f) is subject to the "light touch" arrangements

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

Adopted by Council **6.05.14**. Revised secⁿ 3 k **12.05.15**. Revised secⁿ 18 **3.05.16**. Revised 04.09.18 in line with NALC's amended changes. Revised s3(r) and new s 1t.05.02.19

Revised and updated sections 18c & 18f 4.4.2023 Added section 3w 18.4.2024

under Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).

- d Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
 - i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
 - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee with delegated responsibility.

- e Neither the Council, nor a committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.

- f Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details (LTN87).

19. Handling staff matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of the Council or the staffing committee is subject to standing order 11 above.

- b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the Chairman of the Council (or, if unavailable, the Vice Chairman), of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Council at its next meeting.

- c Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior employee (or other employees) shall contact the chairman

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Revised and updated sections 18c & 18f 4.4.2023 Added section 3w 18.4.2024

of the staffing committee or, in his/her absence, another member of the staffing committee in respect of a formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the staffing committee.

- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by an employee relates to the chairman of the staffing committee, this shall be communicated to another member of the staffing committee, and shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the staffing committee.
- e Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters as confidential and secure.
- f The Council shall keep all written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured and locked and electronic records shall be password protected and encrypted.
- g Records documenting reasons for an employee's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for the same.
- h Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing orders 19 (e), (f) and (g) above if so justified.
- i Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 19 (e), (f) and (g) above shall be provided only to the Clerk and/or the Chairman of the Council.

20. Responsibilities to provide information

- a In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**

21. Responsibilities under Data Protection legislation

(Below is not an exclusive list). *See also standing order 11.*

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

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- a The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
- b **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**
- c **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- d **The 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 Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f **The 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 Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.
- b Responses to the press relating to matters discussed by the Parish Council shall be dealt with in the first instance by the Parish Clerk. The Chairman of the Council is also authorised to give the views of the Council to the press on any non-confidential subject discussed by the Council. Whenever possible any information given to the press shall be given in writing so as not to leave interpretation open to misunderstanding and misreporting. At no time shall the personal views of either members or officers of the Council be given to the press in a way which could be interpreted as a view of the Council as a whole.

23. Execution and sealing of legal deeds

See also standing orders 15(b)(xiii).

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **Subject to standing order 22(a) above, any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

WALTON PARISH COUNCIL

Adopted by Council **6.05.14**. Revised secⁿ 3 k **12.05.15**. Revised secⁿ 18 **3.05.16**. Revised 04.09.18 in line with NALC's amended changes. Revised s3(r) and new s 1t.05.02.19 Revised and updated sections 18c & 18f 4.4.2023 Added section 3w 18.4.2024

The above is applicable to a council without a common seal.

24. Communicating with district councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillors of Ward 5 of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council.

25. Restrictions on councillor activities

- a. Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council:
 - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the 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 requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- 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.
- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible after he/she has delivered his/her acceptance of office form.
- d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.