

# **ROTHERFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

## **STANDING ORDERS**

### **1 MEETINGS**

- a) **The Parish Council shall hold not less than four meetings in each year, of which one shall be the Statutory Annual Meeting.**
- b) **The Statutory Annual Meeting in an election year shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office. In a year that is not an election year it shall be held on such a day in May as the Council may direct.**
- c) The Chairman of the Parish Council may at any time convene a meeting of the Parish Council. If the Chairman refuses to convene a meeting of the Council after a request for that purpose, signed by two Members of the Council, has been presented to him (or without so refusing does not convene it within seven days), any two Members of the Council may forthwith convene a meeting.

### **2 NOTICES**

- a) Notices shall be given to every member of the Council specifying the time and place of each Council or committee meeting and the business to be transacted at the meeting, signed by the Clerk or person(s) calling the meeting. These shall be given three clear days before the meeting and also posted on the Parish noticeboards to inform the public. In the case of the Annual Statutory Meeting the notice shall be given to every member of the Council immediately after their election.
- b) Any member who intends to bring forward any business shall inform the Clerk or the Chairman at least seven days before the meeting. No other business shall be considered if objected to, unless in the opinion of the Council it shall be held to be urgent.

### **3 CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING**

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

### **4 COMMITTEES**

- a) All committees shall have executive powers but the Chairman of each committee shall refer important matters to the Council for its final decision, where further discussion is felt to be appropriate.
- b) The Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Council shall, by virtue of their offices, be members of all committees.
- c) It is expected of every member to sit on at least two committees and have regular attendance at both committee and full council meetings.

### **5 QUORUM**

**A quorum of the Parish council (or its committees) shall consist of not less than one third of its number and in no case less than three.**

### **6 VOTING**

- a) Members shall vote by show of hands, or if at least two members so request, by signed ballot.
- b) **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.**
- c) **Subject to (d) and (e) 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 they gave no original vote.**
- d) **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**

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Chairman and Vice-Chairman until the end of their term of office they may not give an original vote in an election for Chairman.

- e) The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Chairman.

## **7 ORDER OF BUSINESS**

- a) At each Annual Meeting the first business shall be:
- i. To elect a Chairman of the Council;
  - ii. To receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received;
  - iii. In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.
  - iv. To decide when any declarations of acceptance of office and written undertakings to observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council which have not been received as provided by law, shall be received.
  - v. To elect a Vice-Chairman of the Council;
  - vi. To appoint representatives to outside bodies;
  - vii. To appoint committees or any other officers which the Council deems necessary;
- b) At every meeting other than the Annual 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) as are required by law to be made, or if not then received, to decide when they shall be received.
- c) After the first business has been completed, the order of business, unless the Council otherwise decides on the ground of urgency, shall be:
- i. To consider the Minutes of the previous meeting and **after consideration to approve the signature of the Minutes by the person presiding as a correct record.**
  - ii. **To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.**
  - iii. To follow the order of business shown on the Notice of the meeting.

## **8 RULES OF DEBATE**

Amendments to a motion shall be put before the original motion and in the order in which, if agreed to, they would form part of the motion. The first amendment that may be carried shall be substituted for the original motion.

## **9 CONDUCT**

- a) **All members must observe the Code of Conduct that was adopted by the Council on 28 June 2007.**
- b) No member shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman, wilfully obstruct business, or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly **or in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.**

## **10 INTERESTS**

- a) If a member has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct then he shall declare such interest as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the existence and nature of that interest as required.
- b) If a member who has declared a personal interest then considers the interest to be prejudicial, he must withdraw from the meeting room during consideration of the item to which the interest relates.
- c) The Clerk is required to compile and hold a Register of Member's Interests in accordance with agreement reached with the Monitoring Officer of Wealden District Council.

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## **11 DOCUMENTS**

- a) Minutes of the proceedings of the council shall be kept by the Clerk and must be signed by the Chairman of the next meeting.
- b) **All minutes kept by the Council, including those of any committee shall be open for the inspection of any member of the Council and of the public.**

## **12 ADMISSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS TO MEETINGS**

- a) **The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees and sub- committees, which may, however, temporarily exclude the public and press by means of the following resolutions:-**  
***"That in view of the [special] [confidential] nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw"***
- b) The Council shall state the special reason for exclusion.
- c) At all meetings of the Council the Chairman may at his discretion and at a convenient time in the transaction of business, adjourn the meeting so as to allow any members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at that meeting.
- d) At the end of a meeting the Public Forum will take place for a maximum of 10 minutes subject to the following conditions:
  - i. Speeches will not last more than 3 minutes
  - ii. No resident will be allowed to speak more than once

## **13 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

- a) No member of the Council or of any Committee shall disclose to any person who is not a member of the Council any business declared to be confidential at any meeting.
- b) Any member in breach of the provisions in (a) above shall be removed from any Committee by the Council.

## **14 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

- a) The Council shall consider and approve Financial Regulations (to include the placing of contracts) drawn up by the Finance Committee. These will be subject to regular review, at least once every four years.
- b) The conduct of the Council in relation to financial matters shall be bound by these Financial Regulations.

## **15 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

Any or every part of the Standing Orders, except those printed in **bold type** (which have been laid down by various Acts of Parliament) may be suspended during any part of the meeting by resolution, if the number of members present exceeds two thirds of the members of the Council.

These Standing Orders were adopted by the Council at its meeting held on 24th September 2007.

Chairman