

BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

These orders were approved and adopted at a meeting of Bishopstone Parish Council held on Wednesday 31st March 2010 minute 9.4

Consultation January 2010

1. Meetings

1.1. The Statutory Annual Meeting shall be held:

1.1.1. in an election year, on or within fourteen days of the day the Councillors take office

1.1.2. in any other year, on any day in May.

The Parish Council must meet on at least three other occasions throughout the year.

1.2. An extraordinary meeting of the parish council may be called at any time by the Chair (and in his absence by the Deputy Chair) where there is a requirement to deal with urgent or unforeseen business.

1.3. Any two Members of the parish council may submit a written request signed by them to the Chair of the parish council to call an extraordinary meeting. In the event of the Chair not calling an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of receiving the request, the 2 members may call an extraordinary meeting.

1.4. Notice of the time and place of all meetings must be fixed in a conspicuous place in the parish at least 3 clear days* before the day of the meeting. Where an extraordinary meeting is called by Members of the council, the notice shall be signed by those Members and shall specify the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting.

note that a "clear" day excludes the day of the notice, the day of the meeting, weekends and bank holidays.

1.5. All Members of the council shall be given at least 3 clear days notice of all meetings of the council by the Clerk specifying the business proposed to be transacted which will take the form of an agenda.

1.6. A Member having declared a prejudicial interest in any business being considered is entitled to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in the same way as a member of the public but may take no further part in discussion of the relevant business.

1.7. At any meeting where public questions form part of the formal agenda, the maximum duration of public question time shall be limited to 30 minutes with no individual questioner being permitted to speak for more than five minutes. Public participation is limited to items of business on the published agenda.

2. Chair of Meeting

2.1. The Chair of the parish council (and in his/her absence the Deputy Chair) shall chair meetings of the council.

- 2.2. In the event that the person normally expected to chair the meeting is not able to do so, those Members present should decide who amongst them shall preside. The person presiding at a meeting may exercise all the powers and duties of the Chair in relation to the conduct of the meeting.

3. Quorum

- 3.1. No business shall be considered at a meeting of the parish council unless one-third of the total number of eligible Councillors is present. In any event, there must be no fewer than 3 Members present at a meeting.
- 3.2. The meeting shall stand adjourned if the necessary quorum is not present within 30 minutes of the notified start time of the meeting.

4. Voting

- 4.1. All questions to be determined by the council shall be decided by a majority of the members present and voting. Members shall vote by a show of hands. A Member's vote will only be counted if the Member is in the room of the meeting at the time the vote is taken.
- 4.2. Immediately before a vote is taken any Member may request that a vote is recorded. When a request is made the Chair or other Member presiding, shall call the names of all the Members and after each name is called the Member shall state whether they are voting for or against the question put or abstaining. The record of voting shall be recorded in the minutes.
- 4.3. In the case of an equality of votes the Chair, or other Member for the time being chairing the meeting, must give a casting vote whether or not they gave an original vote.
- 4.4. In the event of there being an equality of votes for the election of the Chair of the council at the annual meeting of the parish council, the outgoing Chair must give a casting vote.
- 4.5. 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.

5. Order of Business

- 5.1. In an election year, councillors must execute Declarations of Acceptance of Office in each others' presence, or in the presence of a proper officer previously authorised by the council to take such declaration, before the annual meeting commences.
- 5.2. At each Annual Meeting the first business shall be as a minimum:
 - 5.2.1. to elect a Chairman
 - 5.2.2. to receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance (and if not then received, to determine when it shall be received)
 - 5.2.3. to elect a Vice-chair

- 5.2.4. to appoint statutory or standing committees
 - 5.2.5. to receive declarations of acceptance of office from all members or, where this is not possible, to determine the date of the meeting at or by which these shall be received
 - 5.2.6. after consideration, to approve the signature of the Minutes by the presiding Chair as a correct record
 - 5.2.7. to review arrangements for delegation of functions to and terms of reference of committees and officers and to determine membership and terms of reference of existing and any additional committees.
- 5.3. At any meeting of the council, a motion to vary the order of business on the grounds of urgency may be proposed by the Chair or by any member and, if proposed by the Chair, may be put to the vote without being seconded, and shall be put to the vote without discussion.

6. Rules of Debate

- 6.1. Members shall address the Chair. If two or more members speak together, the Chair shall call upon one of them to speak and the others shall wait.
- 6.2. No discussion shall take place upon the Minutes except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialed by the Chair.
- 6.3. The ruling of the Chair on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.
- 6.4. Should the Chair rise for whatever reason then the meeting shall come to order and Members shall remain silent until such time as the Chair resumes their seat.

7. Disorderly Conduct

- 7.1. No member shall misconduct themselves at a meeting by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair, by willfully obstructing business, or by behaving irregularly, offensively, improperly or in such a manner as to scandalise the Council or to bring it into contempt or ridicule.
- 7.2. If, in the opinion of the Chair, a member has so misconducted themselves, the Chair 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 leave the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith without discussion.
- 7.3. If any motion covered by the paragraph above is disobeyed, the Chair may suspend the meeting or take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce them.

8. Motions and Right of Reply

- 8.1. Where any Member wishes to move an original motion at a meeting of the council, then at least seven clear days written notice shall be provided to the Clerk. Where the motion is deemed to be valid, then it shall be reproduced in full as part of the formal agenda. The Member lodging the motion shall be required to formally move it before any debate. The

mover of any motion shall have a right to reply immediately before the motion is put to the vote.

- 8.2. If an amendment is proposed, the mover of the amendment shall be entitled to a 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. Where an amendment is carried, then this shall become the substantive motion and other amendments shall not be put to the vote. An amendment can be withdrawn at any time by the originating Member.

9. Rescission of Previous Resolution

- 9.1. A decision of the Council in respect of any motion shall not be reversed within six months save by a special resolution, the written notice of motion whereof bears the names of at least three members of the Council.
- 9.2. When a special resolution has been disposed of, no similar motion may be proposed within a further six months.
- 9.3. This Order shall not apply to rescinding resolutions moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.

10. Discussions and Resolutions Affecting Employees of the Council

- 10.1. 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.

11. Committees

- 11.1. The Council may at the Annual Meeting appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as are necessary including appointment of the Chair and Vice-Chair, but subject to the following provisions;
 - 11.1.1 It shall not appoint any member of a committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting, and
 - 11.1.2 It may, subject to the provisions of Standing Order 10, at any time dissolve or alter the membership of a committee.
- 11.2. The Chair of a committee or the Chair of the council may summon a special meeting of that committee at any time. A special 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.
- 11.3. The Standing Orders on rules of debate and the Standing Order on interests of members in contracts and other matters shall apply to committee and sub-committee meetings insofar as they are appropriate.

- 11.4. Chairs of committees and sub-committees shall have a second or casting vote.
- 11.5. A member who has proposed a motion which has been referred to any committee of which they are not a member, may explain their motion to the committee but shall not vote.
- 11.6. Any Council member shall, unless the Council otherwise orders, be entitled to be present as a spectator at the meeting of any committee or sub-committee of which they are not a member.

12. Accounts and Financial Statement

- 12.1. Except as provided otherwise below, all accounts for payment and claims upon the Council shall be laid before the Council.
- 12.2. Where it is necessary to make a payment before it has been authorized by the Council, or where such payment arises from a binding contractual commitment previously authorized by the council and which is consistent with the formal approved budget, such payment shall be certified as to its correctness and urgency by the responsible financial officer, subject to the details being reported to the next council meeting for information.
- 12.3. The Clerk shall supply to each member at the ordinary meeting following the end of the Financial Year a statement of receipts and payments.

13. Standing Orders relating to Contracts

- 13.1. When awarding contracts for the supply of goods, materials or services, the Council will seek to ensure value for money and transparency by inviting a reasonable number of competitive quotations having regard to the estimated value of the contract.
- 13.2. The Council will not be bound to accept the lowest quotation in any instance subject to the reasons for such decision being reported to the Council and formally minuted.
- 13.3. In the case of an emergency, the requirement to seek competitive quotations may be waived subject to the circumstances being reported to the next meeting of the Council.

14. Interests

- 14.1. The Clerk shall keep a record on file of members declared interests as defined by the Model Code of Conduct.

15. Inspection of Documents

- 15.1. All minutes kept by the Council and by any committee shall be open for the inspection of any member of the council.
- 15.2. The Minutes of the Council shall be open for inspection by any local Government elector of the parish without charge.
- 15.3. The Council shall maintain a formal publication scheme.

16. Admission of Public and Press to Meetings

- 16.1. The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees, which may, however, temporarily exclude the public or the press or both by means of the following resolution.

"That in view of the (special) (confidential) nature of the business 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.

- 16.2. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chair may, after warning, order that they be removed from the Council chamber, or that the public gallery be cleared.

17. Confidential Business

No member of the Council, or of any committee or sub-committee, shall disclose to any person not a member of the Council any business declared to be confidential by the Council, the committee or sub-committee, as the case may be.

18. Liaison with Borough Councillor

- 18.1. A notice of all meetings shall be sent to the appropriate Swindon Borough Ward Councillor.

19. Variation, Revocation and Suspension of Standing Orders

- 19.1. Any part of the Standing Orders, other than those explicitly required by statute, may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.
- 19.2. A motion to permanently vary or revoke a Standing Order shall, when proposed and seconded, come into effect at the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

20. Standing Orders to be Given to Members

- 20.1. A printed copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each member by the Clerk upon delivery of that member's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.