

## Compton Dando Parish Council Standing Orders

Standing Orders in bold type are law.

### 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' notice for a meeting, 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, a bank holiday, or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning, shall not count.

c. 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. If a quorum is not present or if during a meeting the number of councillors present (not counting those debarred by reason of a disclosable pecuniary interest) falls below the required quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned and business not transacted shall be transacted at a following meeting.

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 the public's exclusion.

e. Subject to standing order 1d above, members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda during the 10 minute public time.

f. In accordance with standing order 1(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.

g. The local Member of Parliament, County Councillors, District Councillors, police representatives and incumbent vicar are permitted to speak during council meetings.

h. Any person who attends a council meeting may report on the proceedings of the meeting. A person present may not give an oral report or commentary during the meeting, but may: film, photograph or make an audio recording of proceedings; use any other means to enable people not present to see or hear proceedings as it takes place or later; use written reporting on the proceedings during or after the meeting; or use oral reporting after the meeting.

i. 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.

j. The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice Chairman 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.

k. Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman, may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman.

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

## **2. Disclosable pecuniary interest**

**m. Councillors must make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest at any meeting they are present where an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration (unless the interest is a sensitive interest, as defined by the Localism Act, in which event you need not disclose the nature of the interest).**

**n. Councillors must make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any non-disclosable pecuniary interest at any meeting they are present (see Compton Dando Parish Council's Code of Conduct for a definition of a non-disclosable pecuniary interest).**

**o. Councillors must comply with the statutory requirements to register, disclose and withdraw from participating in respect of any matter in which you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (unless you have obtained a dispensation). Councillors must leave the room whilst the item is considered.**

**p. A dispensation may be granted to permit a member to discuss and vote on an item where they have a disclosable pecuniary interest if after having had regard to all relevant circumstances, the council considers that without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business, or considers that granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area, or considers that it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation. A member must submit a written request to the council for a dispensation.**

**q. A dispensation must specify the period for which it has effect and not exceed four years.**

**r. No member of the Council shall disclose to any person, not a member of the Council, any business declared to be confidential by the Council.**

## **3. Voting**

**a. Members shall vote by a show of hands.**

**b. All questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting.**

**c. 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.**

**d. 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.**

**e. A 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 right to participate and vote on that matter.**

#### **4. Motions requiring written notice**

- a. 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 (Parish Clerk) at least 3 clear days before the next meeting.
- b. The Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) 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 (Parish Clerk) 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 (Parish Clerk) in clear and certain language at least 3 clear days before the meeting.
- d. If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) 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 (Parish Clerk) 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 (Parish Clerk) 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.
  - i. To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
  - ii. To approve the absences of councillors.
  - iii. To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
  - iv. To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
  - v. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
  - vi. To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
  - vii. To proceed to the next business on the agenda.

- viii. To close or adjourn debate.
- ix. To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee.
- x. To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any councillors (including substitutes) thereto.
- xi. To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
- xii. To dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
- xiii. To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee.
- xiv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub-committee or an employee.
- xv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
- xvi. To authorise legal deeds signed by two councillors and witnessed.  
(See standing order 18 below.)
- xvii. To authorise the payment of monies.
- xviii. To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
- xix. To extend the time limit for speeches.
- xx. To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
- xxi. To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
- xxii. To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders.
- xxiii. To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law.**
- xxiv. To adjourn the meeting.
- xxv. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
- xxvi. To answer questions from councillors.

## **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 Subject to standing order 3(b) (iii) above, a motion included in an agenda not moved by the councillor who tabled it, may be treated as withdrawn.
- d A motion to amend an original or substantive motion shall not be considered unless proper notice has been given after the original or substantive motion has been seconded and notice of such amendment, shall, if required by the Chairman, be reduced to writing and handed to the Chairman who shall determine the order in which they are considered.
- e A Councillor may move amendments to his own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder.
- f Any amendment to a motion shall be either:
  - i. to leave out words;
  - ii. to add words;
  - iii. to leave out words and add other words.
- g A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration.
- h Only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chairman. No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.
- i Subject to Standing Order 6(h) above, one or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.
- j Pursuant to standing order 6(h) above, the number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a councillor, is limited to one.
- k If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairman.
- l 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.
- m The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 3 minutes.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply in respect of the substantive motion at the very end of debate and immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Subject to standing orders 6(m) and (n) above, a councillor may not speak further in respect of any one motion except to speak once on an amendment moved by another councillor or to make a point of order or to give a personal explanation.

- 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 considers has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman and his decision shall be final.
- r With the consent of the seconder and/or of the meeting, a motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer. A councillor shall not speak upon the said motion or amendment unless permission for the withdrawal of the motion or amendment has been refused.
- s Subject to standing order 6(o) above, when a councillor's 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.
- t In respect of standing order 6(s) (iv) above, the Chairman shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote. The Chairman shall call upon the mover of the motion under debate to exercise or waive his right of reply and shall put the motion to the vote after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the meeting shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

## **7. Statutory Annual Meeting**

- a. In an election year, the statutory 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 the 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 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 becomes 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, 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. At each Annual Meeting of the Council the business shall include:

**i. Elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.**

**ii. Receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office.**

**iii. 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 acceptance of office form unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**

Other matters to be included – non-statutory

i. Review the Council's policies and procedures including: Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Risk Management Policy Complaints Procedure and Grievance and Disciplinary Policy.

ii. Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment.

iii. Annual Inspection of Assets by Clerk.

iv. Review the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

v. Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.

vi. Review banking arrangements including interest levels on accounts

vii. Review the pay and conditions of service of the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk)

- viii. Councillors to review declarations of interest and notify Bath and North East Somerset Council of any changes.
- ix. Review of website and update where required.
- x. Review of the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies.

### **8. 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.**

### **9. Disorderly Conduct**

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) moderate or improve their conduct.

b. If person(s) disregard the request of the Chairman to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the Chairman 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 5(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.

### **10. Minutes**

**a. The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent.**

**b. All minutes kept by the Council shall be open for the inspection of any member of the Council.**

c. 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.

d. No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy.

e. 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.

f. 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.

### **11. Advisory Committees**

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



## **12. Code of Conduct**

- a. All councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.
- b. Unless he 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 has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c. Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.**
- d. A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the Council and that decision is final.
- e. 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.
- f. Subject to standing orders 8d and 8e above, dispensations requests shall be considered at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- g. A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 8e 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.**

## **13. Code of Conduct Complaints**

- a. Upon notification by Bath and North East Somerset Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor has breached the council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) shall, subject to standing order 8 above, report this to the council, unless it is confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.
- b. Where the notification in standing order 9a above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk), the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall decide how to handle the matter accordingly. This may include finding a relief Clerk to carry out the duties of the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) until it has been determined and the council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 9d 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;

d. Upon notification by Bath and North East Somerset Council that a councillor 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.

#### **14. Complaints**

a. The Council shall deal with complaints of maladministration allegedly committed by the Council, or by any officer, or member, following the Complaints Procedure.

#### **15. Accounts and Financial Statement**

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 Proper Officer (Parish Clerk -Responsible Financial Officer) shall supply to each councillor electronically before each meeting a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments and balances held for the financial year to date and a comparison with the budget for the financial year, highlighting any actual or potential overspends.

d. As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk - Responsible Financial Officer) shall provide:

i. a statement summarising the council's receipts and payments for the last quarter and the year to date and

ii. the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 1 of the annual return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.

e. 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) for a year to 31 March. A completed draft annual return shall be presented 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 30 June.

#### **16. Financial Matters**

a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk - Responsible Financial Officer), which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:

i. The accounting records and systems of internal control.

ii. The assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council.

iii. The work of the Internal Auditor 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.

v. Procurement policies (subject to standing order 12b below) including the setting of values for different procedures where the contract has an estimated value of less than £5,000.

**b. Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £5,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in standing order 12c below:**

c. Any formal tender process shall comprise 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 appropriate manner;

iv. Tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk);

v. Tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) 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 Council.

d. The Council is not bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.

**e. 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.**

f. Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the RFO (Responsible Financial Officer), shall be appointed as the Primary User. For the purposes of internet banking, the Parish Clerk (as the RFO), has the authority to be the Primary User for all internet banking transactions. Such transactions will be agreed by Full Council in advance of any transaction being made. All cheque payments and direct debit mandates will be signed by the Parish Clerk and one other Councillor, at a Council meeting following approval by Full Council to make such payments and set up such direct debits.

## **17. Proper Officer**

a. The Council's Proper Officer shall be the Parish Clerk. The Council's Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) shall do the following:

**i. Sign and serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council 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 (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

iii. Send an invitation to attend a meeting of the Council and an agenda to councillors of Bath and North East Somerset Council representing its electoral ward.

iv. Facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors.

v. Retain a copy of every councillor's Register of Interests, include these on the Council website and make them available for inspection.

vi. 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.

vii. Forward to the Council every planning application received within 72 hours of receipt by email, to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

viii. Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.

ix. Manage the organisation, storage of and access to and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form.

x. Process 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 retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.

**xii. 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.**

xiii. Arrange for legal deeds to be signed by 2 councillors and witnessed.

**xiv. Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**

xv. Manage access to information about the council via the publication scheme

xvi. A copy of these Standing Orders and the Council's Code of Conduct shall be given to each member by the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) upon delivery to him/her of the member's declaration of acceptance of office and written undertaking to comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.

### **18. Execution and Sealing of Legal Deeds**

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

**b. In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 5 xvi above, any two members of the Council, may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) shall witness their signatures.**

### **19. Handling Confidential or Sensitive Information**

a. The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.

b. Councillors and the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.

## **20. Handling Staff Matters**

a. The Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) shall notify the chairman of Council (or if he/she is not available, the vice-chairman of Council) of any absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Council at its next meeting.

b. The chairman of Council (or in his/her absence, the vice-chairman) shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk). The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and is subject to approval by resolution by Council.

c. Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) shall contact the chairman of the Council (or in his/her absence, the vice-chairman of Council) in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of Council.

d. Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) relates to the chairman or vice-chairman of Council, this shall be communicated to another member of the Council, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of Council.

e. Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) 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.

## **21. Freedom of Information**

a. Requests for information held by the council shall be handled in accordance with the council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.

b. Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer (Parish Clerk) to the chairman of the Council.

## **22. Variation, Revocation and Suspension of Standing Orders**

a. Any or every part of the standing orders, except those which are mandatory by law (and are printed in bold type) may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

b. A motion to permanently add to, 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 Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.

**Standing Orders Adopted on 21st February 2017.**

**Amended January 2020:**

**Signed..... Date.....**

**Signed..... Date.....**