

HAMBLEDEN PARISH COUNCIL
STANDING ORDERS TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE NALC
STANDING ORDERS OF JUNE 2011

(as RESOLVED at the Council Meeting on 11th July 2016)

For the purposes of this document, 'Chairman' means Chairman of the Council.

Dates of Meetings

1. The Ordinary Meetings of the Council shall be held on the second Monday of the month with the exception of August under normal circumstances. Such a meeting may be called or changed if the Council so votes. An extra meeting may be called by the Chairman or Clerk if the circumstances demand.
2. In an election year the Annual Parish Council meeting shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the Councillors elected take office. In a non election year the Annual Parish Council meeting shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.
3. A Council meeting and its agenda should be announced on the Parish Notice boards with three clear days of notice. Councillors should have the agenda served via email or delivered to their address if requested with four clear days of notice.

Quorum

4. A quorum shall consist of 4. Where more than one third of the members are disqualified to vote e.g. through declaration of interest, then until the number in office is increased to not less than two thirds, the quorum is determined by reference to the number of councillors remaining qualified to act. In no case can the quorum be less than 3.

Chairman

5. The person presiding at a meeting shall exercise all powers and duties of the Chairman in relation to the conduct of the meeting.

Special Meetings

6. Special Meetings of the Council shall be called by the Clerk upon request by 3 members, or the Chairman, subject to three days' notice.

Voting

7. Members shall vote by a show of hands or by a ballot, by resolution of the Council. Voting may be completely recorded by agreement of the Council. On an equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a second (casting) vote whether or not they gave an original vote.
8. Every Councillor has one vote each. In the event where the number of votes are the same whether for or against, the Chairman shall cast a second vote.
9. All proposals shall have a proposer and seconder.
10. All proposals that have been seconded must be written down accurately, clearly without ambiguity, and read to the meeting before the votes are cast.
11. Amendments must be proposed, written down and read out before any votes are cast.
12. The amendment must be voted on before the proposal or amended proposal is voted upon.
13. If there be more than one amendment, then they must be voted upon in reverse order.

Order of Business at the Annual Parish Council Meeting

14. The first business shall be:-
 - a) To elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman and to sign and receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance
 - b) To appoint Standing Committees.
 - c) To appoint representatives to Other Bodies.
 - d) To receive a statement of accounts.Thereafter shall follow the order set out below (at Ordinary Meetings).

Subject to a) and b) below, the Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in

any case of an equality of votes may give a casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.

- a) 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 may not give an original vote in an election for Chairman.
- b) The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Chairman.
- c) in the ordinary year of election of Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations;
- d) 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.

Order of Business at Ordinary Meetings

15. a) In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the Meeting shall first appoint a Member to preside.
- b) To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting.
- c) To dispose of any business remaining from the last meeting.
- d) To receive reports from a) the Chairman, b) the Clerk, c) Committees.
- e) To consider correspondence.
- f) To conduct relevant business.

Proceedings at Meetings

16. To consider proposals in the order in which they shall have been received. Notice of agenda items, which must be in writing, shall be delivered to the Council Offices no later than 12.00 hours on the Friday of the week 10 days prior to the meeting, in order that they can be placed on the agenda. Agenda items should be as concise as possible. Where necessary, they may be supported by a separate paper to be circulated with the agenda. If this is not the case, the Clerk to precis the item, perhaps in conjunction with the Chairman of the Council, if the Clerk feels it necessary. Any papers pertaining to agenda items may only be tabled at Council Meetings with the prior permission of the Chairman, with reading time allowed. Every proposal shall be relevant to some question on which the Council has power to act, or which affects the Parish. Proposals for alterations to the minutes shall, if possible, be made in writing, stating clearly the new wording proposed, and be delivered to the Clerk no later than 12.00 hours on the Friday of the week 10 days prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered.

Public Questions

17. a) A period, not to exceed thirty minutes, shall be permitted at the Chairman's discretion to receive questions from members of the public who may be attending a meeting.
- b) A motion to vary the time allowed for public questions,
 - i) may be proposed by the Chairman or any member and, if proposed by the Chairman, may be put to the vote without being seconded, and
 - ii) shall be put to the vote without discussion.

Standing Committees

18. Committees shall conduct their business in accordance with the Terms of Reference for Committees.

Suspension of Standing Orders

19. Standing Orders may be suspended only on a matter of urgency and by a two-thirds majority of the Members present.

Six Month Rule

20. A decision of the Council shall not be reversed within six months, save by a special resolution. The written notice thereof shall contain the signatures of four Members.

Limit on Agenda Items

21. No Councillor may make more than three proposals or request more than three items to be placed on the agenda. No Councillor may ask more than three questions, including supplementaries, concerning past business, in the course of any one meeting.

Time Limit on Speeches and Meetings

22. No Councillor may speak for more than five minutes on any one subject at any one time. At 10.30pm the Chairman shall put to the Members whether they wish to continue or adjourn the meeting.

Right of Reply

23. The proposer shall have the right of reply at the close of the debate on the proposal before it is put to the vote.

Behaviour of Members

24. All members must observe the Model Code of Conduct for Parishes which was adopted by this Council in July 2012.
- If any member reasonably believes that another member is in breach of the Code of Conduct, that member is under a duty to report that breach to the Standards Committee.
- a) No member shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman, wilfully obstruct business or behave irregularly, improperly, or in such a way as to bring the Council into disrepute. If any member contravenes these rules, the Chairman or any other member may move that 'The member named be not further heard', and the motion, if seconded, shall be put and determined without discussion.
 - b) If a member continues his/her misconduct after a motion under the foregoing paragraph has been carried, the Chairman shall:
Either move that the member leaves the meeting (in which case the motion shall be put and determined without discussion)
Or
Adjourn the meeting of the Council for such a period as his/her discretion shall consider expedient.
 - c) In the event of a general disturbance which in the opinion of the Chairman renders the due and orderly dispatch of business impossible, the Chairman, in addition to any other power vested in him/her, may without question put, adjourn the meeting of the Council for whatever period he/she shall by his/her discretion consider expedient, and may take such further steps as may be reasonably considered.
 - d) If a member has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in July 2012 then he shall declare such an interest as soon as it become apparent, disclosing the existence and the nature of that interest as required.
 - e) If a member who has declared a personal interest then considers the interest to be prejudicial, he must withdraw from the room during consideration of the item to which the interest relates.
 - f) The Clerk may be required to compile and hold a register of Member's Interests, or a copy thereof, in accordance with agreement reached with the Monitoring Officer of Wycombe District Council as required by statute.
 - g) All minutes kept by the Council and by any committee shall be open to inspection by any member of the Council.
 - h) A Councillor who does not attend for six consecutive Parish Council meetings ceases automatically to be a member of the Council unless either he has a 'statutory excuse' or his failure to attend is due to a reason approved by the council e.g. ill health; attendance at WDC/BCC meetings.

Public Statements

25. No Councillor, whether or not serving on any external bodies, shall make any statement or cause any publicity to arise, in the name of, or on behalf of, the Parish Council, unless the approval of the full Parish Council has previously been given. The Clerk to the Council is the Proper Officer for the issuing of such material.

Admission of Public and Press to Meetings

26. The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees. They may be temporarily excluded by the following resolution: "That in view of the special/confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, the press and public will be temporarily excluded and they are now instructed to withdraw". The special reasons for the exclusion shall be given. At a time during the meetings of the Council, a convenient time in the transaction of business, the Chairman may invite the public to address the meeting. The Clerk shall afford the press reasonable facilities for the taking of any report of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present.

Filming and recording of meetings

27. If circumstances arise where the likelihood of filming or recording of the meeting by members of the public is considered possible, the Chairman will remind the public that data protection and if relevant, the protection of vulnerable adults or children is of paramount importance.

On 6 August 2014, the 1960 Act was amended by the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 ("the 2014 Regulations"). The amended 1960 Act provides that a person may not orally report or comment about a meeting as it takes place if he is present at the meeting of a parish council or its committees but otherwise may:

- a) film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting;
- b) use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later;
- c) report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting

Miscellaneous

28. Any questions of a purely administrative nature shall be dealt with by written response from the Clerk.

29. The Council may refer any item to a Committee for further discussion.

30. The Parish Council authorises the Clerk to arrange emergency repairs, if possible after consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman, up to a value of £500.

Interpretation of Standing Orders

31. The ruling of the Chairman on the interpretation or application of these Standing Orders shall be final.

Accounts and Financial Statements

32. All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Council Financial Regulations.