

Welford • Hoe Benham • Easton

Welford Parish Council
Weston • Wickham • Halfway

STANDING ORDERS

REGULAR MEETINGS:

Meetings of the Council shall normally be held on the second Wednesday of each alternate month, in the Village Hall or online (as appropriate) at 7pm. Additional Meetings may be arranged.

Meetings should not last longer than two hours. If this cannot be avoided a break must be permitted.

ANNUAL STATUTORY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL:

In an election year, the Annual General Council Meeting shall be held on, or within 14 days following the day on which the Councillors were elected. In a year which is not an election year the Annual General Council Meeting shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct. The elected Chairman presides the meetings.

PROPER OFFICER: The duties of the clerk and responsible financial officer, are as follows:

- To receive declarations of Acceptance of office, at AGM.
- To receive and record notices declaring members' interests at AGM.
- To receive and retain plans and documents.
- To sign notices and other documents, on behalf of the Council.
- To sign and issue summons to attend Meetings of the Council.
- To produce Minutes for signing by the Chairman, at the next Meeting.

QUORUM OF THE COUNCIL.

Four members of the total membership shall constitute a quorum at meetings of Council.

If a quorum is not present or if during a meeting the number of councillors present (not counting those debarred by reason of a declared interest) falls below the required quorum, the Meeting shall be adjourned and business not transacted shall be transacted at the next Meeting, or on such a day the Chairman may fix. However should the item under discussion be a planning application, then the Meeting shall be considered quorate when 3 or more members are present (not counting those debarred by reason of a declared interested).

VOTING – ALL IN FAVOUR?

Councillors shall vote by show of hands or, if two councillors so request, by signed ballot.

If a Councillor so requires, the clerk shall record the names of the councillors 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.

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

At each AGM the first business shall be

- To elect a Chairman of the Council
- To co-opt to fill vacancies.
- To elect a Vice Chairman.
- To appoint representatives to outside bodies.
- To appoint Committees and sub-committees.
- To deal with business which is required by statute to be done and continue with business in the usual order.
- To read and consider Minutes, provided that a copy has been circulated to each Councillor, not later than the day of issue of summons to attend the Meeting, the Minutes may be taken as read.
- After consideration, to approve the signature of the Minutes by the person presiding, as a correct record. Ask All in Favour?
- Deal with Matters Arising.
- To receive such communications as the Chairman may wish to lay before the Council.
- To answer questions from Councillors.
- To receive and consider reports from Committees.
- To receive and consider resolutions or recommendations in the order in which they have been notified.
- To authorise payments.

URGENT BUSINESS

A motion to vary the order of business on the grounds of urgency may be proposed by the Chairman or by any Councillor, and if proposed by the Chairman may be put to the vote without being seconded, and shall be put to the vote without discussion.

RESOLUTIONS MOVED WITHOUT NOTICE

Resolutions dealing with the following matters may be moved without notice:

- To appoint a Chairman of the Meeting
- To correct the Minutes
- To approve the Minutes
- To alter the order of business
- To proceed to the next business
- To close or adjourn the debate
- To refer a matter to Committee
- To appoint a committee or any members thereof.
- To adopt a report
- To amend a motion
- To give leave to withdraw a resolution or amendment
- To extend the time limit for speeches
- To exclude the press and public
- To silence or eject from the Meeting a member named for misconduct.
- To give consent of the Council where such consent is required by these standing orders.
- To suspend any standing order.
- To adjourn the Meeting.

QUESTIONS

A Councillor or member, may ask the Chairman of the Council, or the Clerk, any question concerning the business of the Council, providing that 3 clear days notice (of the question) has been given to the person to whom it is addressed. No questions that are not connected with the business under discussion, shall be asked, except during the part of the Meeting set aside for questions.

Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

A person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer.

RULES OF DEBATE

No discussion of the Minutes shall take place, except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialled by the Chairman.

No speech by a mover of a resolution shall exceed 4 minutes and no other speech shall exceed 3 minutes, except by consent of the Council.

An amendment shall be either:

- i) To leave out words
- ii) To leave out words and insert others.
- iii) To insert or add words.

If an amendment be carried, the resolution, as amended shall take the place of the original resolution and shall become the resolution upon which any further amendment may be moved. A further amendment shall not be moved until the Council has disposed of every amendment previously moved.

The mover of a resolution or of an amendment shall have right of reply, not exceeding 3 minutes. When a resolution is under debate no other resolution shall be moved.

Members shall address the Chairman. If two or more members wish to speak, the Chairman shall decide who to call upon.

Whenever the Chairman speaks during a debate, all other members shall be silent.

CLOSURE

At the end of any speech a councillor may say “that the debate be now adjourned” or “the Council do now adjourn”. If this is seconded, the Chairman shall put the motion.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT:

No member shall at a Meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman. Or behave irregularly, improperly or in such a manner to bring the Council into disrepute. The Chairman may adjourn the Meeting.

VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS:

When more than two persons have been nominated for any position to be filled by the Council, and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list, and a fresh vote taken. And so on, until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.

DISCUSSIONS AFFECTING EMPLOYEES:

If at a Meeting there arising any question relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service, it shall not be discussed until it is decided whether or not the press and/or public shall be present. Part Two may be authorised.

EXPENDITURE:

Payments shall be authorised by the Council, and signed by two Councillors. The RFO shall not be a signatory on any cheques.

ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

All accounts for payments shall be laid before the Council. The responsible Financial Officer (Clerk) shall supply soon after March 31st, a statement of the account transactions for the past year. Each Councillor shall receive one. The Statement of Accounts shall be examined by the Internal Auditor, and processed onwards to the External Audit.

PRECEPT

The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming Financial Year at its meeting in December/January for submission to West Berkshire Council by the end of January.

INTERESTS

If a member has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct, he shall declare it, disclosing the nature of that interest. If he later considers that his interest is prejudicial, he must withdraw from the chamber during the consideration of the item.

The Clerk should keep a record of Members' Interests, a copy of which is filed in WBC Legal department.

APPOINTMENTS

If a candidate for any appointment under the Council is to his knowledge related to the holder of any office in the Council, he should disclose the relationship in writing to the Clerk. A candidate who fails to do so shall be disqualified for the appointment, and if already appointed shall be dismissed without notice.

INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

A member may inspect any document in possession of the Council and be supplied, if asked, with a copy for a small charge.

UNAUTHORISED ACTIVITIES

No member of the Council or of any Committee shall in the name of the Council, inspect any land or premises which the Council has a right and duty to inspect, unless authorised to do so by the Parish Council.

ADMISSION TO THE PUBLIC AND PRESS TO MEETINGS

The public and press shall be admitted to all Meetings which may, however, temporarily exclude them, by means of the following:

- 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. The Council shall state the special reason for exclusion.

At all meetings of the Council the Chairman may at his discretion adjourn the meeting so as to allow any members of the public to address the Meeting in relation to the business being transacted.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

No member of the Council shall disclose to any person, any business declared to be confidential by the Council. Any Member in breach of this Standing Order shall be removed from the Council or Committee.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Clerk shall, as soon as practicable, refer every Planning Application to the planning committee and decisions can only be made with a quorum of three persons.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Council should consider and approve Financial Regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer.

- The accounting records and systems of internal control
- The assessment and management of risks faced by the Council
- The work of the Internal Auditor and the receipt of reports.

Any proposed Contract for the supply of goods, materials and services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £10,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender, as follows:

- A public notice of intention to place a contract to be placed in local newspapers.
- Specification of goods, materials, services and the execution of works to be drawn up.
- Tenders are to be sent in a sealed marked envelope, to the Clerk by a certain date of time.
- Tenders submitted are to be opened, after the stated closing date and time, by the Clerk and at least one member of the Council.
- Tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate Meeting of the council.
- The Council is not bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.

The Financial Regulations of the Council shall be reviewed every four years.

COMPLAINTS

The Council shall deal with complaints of maladministration allegedly committed by the Council or by any officer, in such a manner as adopted by the Council.

**APPROVED AT THE WELFORD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 10TH MARCH
2021**

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Chairman

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Clerk to the Council