



# Langton Matravers Parish Council

## Standing Orders

### Introduction

These Orders should be read in conjunction with the Council's Code of Conduct, Policy documents and Finance Regulations. Standing Orders in **bold type** are **statutory**.

### Section A: Meetings

1. **Ordinary Meetings of the Council shall normally be held at 7pm unless by prior agreement with all members of the Council.** Meetings shall be held on the second Thursday in each month, but at least normally during the first half of each month.
2. **At least three clear days before any Meeting of the Council a notice stating the time and place of the Meeting and the business to be transacted shall be posted in the Council's notice-cases and published on the Council's website.**
3. Extraordinary Meetings of the Council may be held at any time after three clear days' notice has been given to all Members and after three clear days' notice has been given to the general public by publishing details of the meeting.
4. **An Extraordinary Meeting of the Council may be convened at any time by the Chairman, as long as three clear days' notice is given. If any two Councillors sign a requisition that the Council be convened and the Chairman does not do so within seven days, then any two Councillors may forthwith convene the Meeting.**
5. **When calculating the 3 clear days for notice of a meeting to councillors and the public, 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 or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning shall not count.**

- 6. 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.**
- 7. 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.**
- 8. Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is permitted so long as this does not disrupt the meeting in any way.**
- 9. In accordance with standing order 8 above, 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.**
- 10. 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.**
- 11. The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman, if present, 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 at the meeting.**
- 12. The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present.**
- 13. The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors in respect of the entire meeting.**

14. **An interest arising from the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council, the existence and nature of which is required to be disclosed by a Councillor at a meeting shall be recorded in the minutes.**
15. **A Quorum of a Meeting of the Council shall consist of any three Councillors including the Chairman.**
16. **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted.**

#### **Section B: Procedures for Meetings**

1. Matters for inclusion on the agenda of a Council meeting must reach the Clerk ten days before the day of the meeting. Each item must be accompanied by a paper outlining the content of the proposed discussion. Any proposed resolution must be included.
2. **Copies of the agenda of each Council Meeting shall be distributed to all Councillors by the Clerk five days before the date of a meeting.** Copies shall also be available for the Press and the general public at meetings.
3. Minutes shall be an accurate record of the proceedings and decisions made by the Council at the meeting and may include comments made by the public.
4. Draft minutes of Council Meetings shall be distributed to all Councillors as soon as possible after the meeting for their inspection. After reading by Councillors, draft minutes should be published in notice cases and on the Council's website. Copies of draft minutes shall be available for Press and public at meetings.
5. 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.
6. No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the minutes shall not require written notice.

7. 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.
8. The Chairman shall adjourn the meeting for Public Participation and reconvene the meeting after Public Participation.
9. Members of the public may not speak at a meeting except during the Public Participation, period or at other times when invited by the Chairman. When speaking, members of the public must address all comments to the Chair.
10. A question asked by a member of the public during a Public Participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate.
11. A member of the public shall raise their hand when requesting to speak, give their name and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The Chairman may at any time permit an individual to be seated when speaking. The Chairman may permit written Public Discussion submissions to be read out by the Clerk on behalf of a member of the public who is present at the meeting.
12. **All decisions and enactments of the Council must be made by a majority of members present and voting, other than those disqualified by Declaration of Interest. Voting shall normally be by a show of hands. The Chairman of a meeting has a casting vote and may therefore vote twice when those voting are equally divided for and against a motion.**
13. At any Council Meeting a formal proposal should be reduced to writing by the proposer or by the Clerk, but if this is done by the Clerk, the reduction shall be read out before a vote is taken.
14. A proposal tabled at a Council Meeting must be put to the vote if seconded, unless it is immediately withdrawn by the proposer.
15. Only one proposal or amendment thereof 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.

16. The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding five minutes.
17. Subject to standing order 14 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.
18. Subject to standing order 14 above, when a councillor's motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except:
  - to amend the motion,
  - to proceed to the next business,
  - to adjourn the debate,
  - to put the motion to a vote,
  - to ask a person to be silent or for him/her to leave the meeting,
  - to refer a motion to a committee, sub-committee or working group for consideration,
  - to exclude the public and press,
  - to adjourn the meeting,
  - to suspend any standing order, except those which are mandatory.
19. In respect of standing order 14 above, the Chairman shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote.
20. The number of votes cast either for or against a proposal shall be recorded, but not formally minuted. **The names of those voting shall not be minuted unless, before the vote is taken, any Councillor requests that the way in which each Councillor votes be recorded, in which case that request must be granted.**
21. No decision shall be taken on a matter which does not appear on the agenda, the Clerk's Report or is addressed by the Council following the Public Discussion period. The monthly Report presented by the Clerk shall

be taken as an integral part of the agenda once it has been received by the Council.

22. When a decision has been taken upon a formal proposition, that decision shall not be revoked or rescinded for a period of at least six months.

**23. The Council may suspend any Standing Order except those which are mandatory by law.**

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

**25. In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 24 above, any two members of the Council may sign on behalf of the Council any deed required by law and the Clerk shall witness their signatures.**

26. The Council may appoint Committees and arrange for them to perform any Council functions except the power to issue a Precept or to borrow money. A purely Advisory Committee may consist entirely of non-councillors, but at least two-thirds of any other Committee must be Members of the Council. All Members of a Finance Committee must be Members of the Council, except the Clerk, who shall be present in a nonvoting capacity.

27. All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Freedom of Information A 2000.

28. The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.

29. A councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than 3 times in one meeting may result in him or her being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.

### **Section C: Planning Meetings**

1. Decisions as to what comment shall be made upon each Development Plan received from Dorset Council shall be taken at the regular monthly meetings of the Council. These comments shall be submitted via Dorset

Council's Planning portal as soon as possible after the meeting. If a plan is received after the distribution of the agenda, the Clerk shall add this to the published copy of the agenda. Such a plan shall then be deemed to have been included on the agenda.

2. All Development Plans are available to the public via Dorset Council's Planning portal. Facilities shall be provided for written comments by members of the public to be made on planning matters immediately prior to the meeting. These comments by members of the public and also any letters received making comments upon any plan to be discussed shall be read out before the relevant plan is discussed.
3. If a comment on a planned development is needed between normal monthly Council meetings, then, at the discretion of the Chairman, an Extraordinary meeting or sub-committee shall be called. Any such subcommittee will have appropriate delegated powers and consist of the Chairman and 2 or more other members of the Council.

#### **Section D: Annual Meetings**

1. **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.**
2. **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.**
3. **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 7pm, unless by prior agreement with all members of the Council.**
4. **The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.**
5. **The Chairman of the Council, unless he or she has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until a successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**

6. **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless he or she 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.**
7. **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he or she 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.**
8. **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he or she shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He or she 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.**
9. **In an election year, the Clerk shall receive from all Councillors their declarations of acceptance of office.** The Clerk shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders and the Code of Conduct to a councillor upon delivery of his/her declaration of acceptance of office.
10. At each Annual meeting the Council shall appoint or confirm the appointment of the following:
  - Representatives to the Timson Trust Management Committee.
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  - Representative on the Village Hall Management Committee.
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  - Members of the Staff Employment, Disciplinary and Complaints Committee.
  - Members of the Staff Appeals Committee
  - Members of the Governance and Policy Working Group
  - Two Allotment Liaison Officers.
  - Internal Auditor.
  - Bank Signatories.



11. The Council may appoint any other Liaison Officers or Portfolio Holders as they deem fit.

12. **The Council shall review and/or adopt** the following:

- **Standing orders.**
- **Finance regulations.**
- Asset Register.
- Risk Register
- All other Governance documents and policies as have been previously agreed by the Council.

13. The Council may hold an Annual Parish Assembly for the benefit of the Parish, at which community groups and representatives of local organisations may be invited to speak or mount displays.

#### **Section E: Code of Conduct**

1. **All councillors shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.**
2. **Councillors may exercise the rights contained in standing order 3 below only if members of the public are permitted to (i) make representations, (ii) answer questions and (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted.**
3. **Councillors with a prejudicial interest in relation to any item of business being transacted at a meeting may (i) make representations, (ii) answer questions and (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted but must, thereafter, leave the room or chamber.**

#### **Section F: Members of Council**

1. The nine members of the Council are elected for a term as may be decided by the Electoral Commission and retire together on the fourth day after the date of the next election, except for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
2. All Councillors must sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which includes an undertaking to abide by the Council's Code of Conduct, either before or at the commencement of the first Meeting of the Council after the election, unless the Council formally fixes a date for a special meeting

at which this Declaration is to be made by any Councillor who is unable to attend the first meeting after the election. Failure to make the Declaration according to the above rules causes the seat to fall vacant automatically.

3. The office of Councillor becomes vacant if he or she resigns in writing to the Chairman, or if he or she becomes disqualified, or if he or she is absent from Meetings of the Council for six consecutive months, unless the reason for absence is formally approved by the Council.
4. Every vacancy on the Council must be publicly notified and notified to the Returning Officer immediately it occurs. If no poll is claimed within fourteen days after the date of notification, not including Saturdays, Sundays and Christmas Eve, Bank Holidays and days appointed for Public Thanksgiving or Mourning, the casual vacancy may be filled by co-option at a properly convened Meeting of the entire Council by an absolute majority of those present and voting. If, on the other hand, a poll is claimed in writing by ten electors within the specified period after the notification of the vacancy, a bye-election must take place.
5. Where a casual vacancy occurs within six months before the day on which the Councillor whose office is vacant would normally have retired, an election to fill the vacancy shall not be held. The Council nevertheless may fill the vacancy by co-option if it wishes.
6. Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee, issue orders, instructions or directions.
7. Unless authorised by a resolution, no Councillors shall in their official capacity provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media.
8. No Member of the Council shall disclose to any person not a member of the Council information given in confidence which they believe, or ought to be aware is of a personal or commercially sensitive nature.

## **Section G: Personnel**

1. The Council shall employ a Clerk, who shall carry out duties as defined in his/her contract. The Clerk shall also act as the Responsible Financial

Officer and Clerk to the Burial Board, responsible for Crack Lane Cemetery. The Clerk shall be paid monthly according to the rates and totals laid down from time to time by the Council in the Conditions of Employment of the Clerk.

2. The name, postal and e-mail address and telephone number of the Clerk shall be displayed in the Council's notice-cases, at the Council's Cemetery, on the Council's website and on the door of the Council Office, so that parishioners may make appointments to see him or her at their convenience.
3. The Council may employ a part-time Caretaker of the Council's Cemetery, who shall be paid monthly by the Clerk upon presentation of an account according to the rates and totals laid down from time to time by the Council in the Contract with the Cemetery Caretaker.
4. The Cemetery Caretaker shall be allowed the use of the cemetery shed as a store for tools and equipment used in the maintenance of the cemetery. A second key of the door of this shed shall be kept by the Clerk. The Council shall have the right to inspect the interior of the shed at any time, provided that the Chairman is present, with either one other Councillor or the Clerk, both being present at the same time.
5. The Council may employ a part-time Cleaner to clean the Council's Public Conveniences at 1A High Street, Langton Matravers. The cleaner shall be paid monthly by the Clerk upon presentation of an account according to the rates and totals laid down from time to time by the Council in the Contract with the Cleaner of Public Conveniences.
6. The Council may, by resolution, employ other contractors/employees to undertake such work as may be of benefit to the Parish.

Adopted by resolution of the Council, 9th January 2014,

Reviewed and approved without change by resolution of the Council, May 8<sup>th</sup> 2014

Revised and approved by resolution of the Council, 14th May 2015

Revised and approved by resolution of the Council, 8th October 2015

Reviewed and approved without change by resolution of the Council, 12th May 2016

Reviewed and approved without change by resolution of the Council 11<sup>th</sup> May 2017

Revised and approved by resolution of the Council, 9th November 2017

Reviewed and approved without change by resolution of the Council, 10<sup>th</sup> May 2018

Revised and approved by resolution of the Council, 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Revised and approved by resolution of the Council, 11th May 2023