

CASTERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Standing Orders 2015

Standing Orders

1. Rules of debate at meetings

a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting.

b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.

c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.

d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.

e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.

f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.

g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the Chairman.

h A councillor may move an amendment to his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.

i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chairman.

J Subject to standing order 1(k) below, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.

k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.

l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive Motion.

M The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.

n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate of the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.

o Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:

- i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
- ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
- iii. to make a point of order;
- iv. to give a personal explanation; or v. in exercise of a right of reply.

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 other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.

q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.

r When a 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 no longer heard or 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; or
- ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory requirements.

s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.

t Excluding motions moved understanding order 1(r) above, the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed **5** minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

2. Disorderly conduct at meetings

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) to moderate or improve their conduct.

b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting 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 2(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.

3. Meetings generally

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 The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include 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.

c The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice.

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 Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting, which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) above shall not exceed **15** minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.

g Subject to standing order 3(f) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than **5** minutes.

h In accordance with standing order 3(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.

i A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]. The chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.

j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the Meeting.

k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.

l The right to record, film and to broadcast meetings of the council, committees and sub committees is established following the Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014. This is in addition to the rights of the press and public to attend such meetings.

i) Meetings or parts of meetings from which the press and public are excluded may not be filmed or recorded.

ii) Members of the public are permitted to film or record meetings to which they are permitted access in a non-disruptive manner. This permission is conditional on those recording proceedings not to edit the film or recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings, or infringe the core values of the Council. This includes refraining from editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule, or show lack of respect, towards those being filmed or recorded.

iii) The use of digital and social media recording tools, for example Twitter, blogging or audio recording be allowed as long as it is carried out in a non-disruptive way and only to the extent that it does not interfere with any person's ability, even where he or she has a disability, to follow the debate.

iv) While those attending meetings are deemed to have consented to the filming, recording or broadcasting of meetings, those exercising the rights to film, record and broadcast must respect the rights of other people attending under the Data Protection Act 1998.

v) The Chairman of the meeting has the authority to stop a meeting and take appropriate action if any person contravenes these principles or is deemed to be recording in a disruptive manner.

vi) Any person or organisation choosing to film, record or broadcast any meeting of the Council or a committee is responsible for any claims or other liability from them so doing.

vii) The Council will display requirements as to filming, recording and broadcasting at its meeting venues and those undertaking these activities will be deemed to have accepted them whether they have read them or not.

viii) The Council may itself photograph, film, record or broadcast meetings and can retain, use or dispose of such material in accordance with its retention and disposal policies.

m The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.

n Subject to standing orders, which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his/her absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if any).

o 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.

p Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors or councillors with voting rights present and voting.

q The chairman of a meeting 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.

See standing orders 5(i) and (j) below for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the council.

r Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. 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.

s The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

- i. the time and place of the meeting;
- ii. the names of councillors present and absent;
- iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
- iv. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
- v. if there was a public participation session; and
- vi. the resolutions made.

t A councillor or a non-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.

u 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 three.

v If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another Meeting.

w A meeting shall not exceed a period of **2** hours.

4. Ordinary council meetings

a 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.

b 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.

c If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the council shall take place at 7 pm.

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 In addition to the annual meeting of the council, any number of other ordinary meetings may be held in each year on such dates and times as the council may direct.

f The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council.

g The Chairman of the Council, unless (s)he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his/her successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the council.

h The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless (s)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.

i In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the council, (s)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.

j In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the council, (s)he shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. (S)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.

k Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the council, the business of the annual meeting shall include:

i. 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/her acceptance of office form unless the council resolves for this to be done at a later date;

ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the council;

iii. Review and adoption of appropriate Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

iv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks

vi. Review of the council clerk's subscription to other bodies

vii. Review the council's complaints procedure

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

5. Extraordinary meetings of the council

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 seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.

6. Previous resolutions

a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least **3** councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9 below

b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

7. Voting on appointments

a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

8 Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer

a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for and in any event shall relate to the performance of the council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the council's area or its residents.

b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least **14** clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.

c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.

d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) 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 so that it can be understood at least 14 clear days before the meeting.

e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer 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 in the agenda or rejected.

f Subject to standing order 9(e) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.

g Motions received shall be recorded in a book for that purpose and numbered in the order that they are received.

h Motions rejected shall be recorded in a book for that purpose with an explanation by the Proper Officer for their rejection.

9. Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice

a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer;

- i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
- ii. to move to a vote;
- iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
- iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
- v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
- vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
- vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
- viii. to require a written report;
- ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
- x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
- xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
- xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
- xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
- xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
- xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory requirements);
- xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii. to close a meeting.

10. 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 staff shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.

11. Draft minutes

a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.

b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a) above.

c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, 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.

d If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:
“The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”

e Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be Destroyed.

12. Code of conduct and dispensations See also standing order 3(t) above.

a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the council.

b Unless(s)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 (s)he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. (S)He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which (s)he had the interest.

c Unless (s)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 (s)he has another interest if so required by the council’s code of conduct. (S)He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which (s)he had the interest.

d Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.

e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer and that decision is final.

f 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.

g Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f) above, dispensations requests shall be considered by the Proper Officer at the beginning of the meeting of the council, for which the dispensation is required.

h A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) 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. Complaints

Complaints Procedure

The following procedure shall apply when efforts to deal with a complaint informally by either the Clerk or Chair have been unsuccessful

Receipt of Complaint

1. The complainant will be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk.
2. If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk,(s)he should be advised to address it to the Chair of the Council.
3. The Clerk shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council or by the Committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints.
4. The complainant should also be advised whether the complaint will be treated as confidential.
5. The complainant shall be invited to attend a meeting and to bring with them a representative if they wish.
6. Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence relied on. The Council shall provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely on at the meeting and shall do so promptly, allowing

the claimant the opportunity to read the material in good time for the meeting.

At the Meeting

6. The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
7. The Chair should introduce everyone and explain the procedure.
8. The complainant (or representative) should outline the grounds for complaint and, thereafter, questions may be asked by (i) the Clerk or other nominated officer and then (ii), members.
9. The Clerk will have an opportunity to explain the Council's position and questions may be asked by (i) the complainant and (ii), members.
10. The Clerk and then the complainant should be offered the opportunity to summarise their position.
11. The Clerk and/or the Chair and the complainant may be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, *both* parties shall be invited back.
12. The Clerk and the complainant should be given the opportunity to wait for the decision but if the decision is unlikely to be finalised on that day they should be advised when the decision is likely to be made and when it is likely to be communicated to them.

After the Meeting

13. The decision should be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.

Code of conduct complaints

a Upon notification by the District or County Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11 above, report this to the Council.

b Where the notification in standing order 13(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d) below]

c The council may:

- i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint as 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 the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights 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. Proper Officer

a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.

b The Proper Officer shall:

i at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, serve on councillors a summons, by email, confirming the time, place and the agenda provided any such email contains the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer See standing order 3(b) above for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of the council.

ii. give the public notice of the time, place and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the council See standing order 3(b) above for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council.

iii. subject to standing order 9 above, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least **14** days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;

- iv. convene a meeting of full council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;
- v. facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;
- vi. receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;
- vii. retain acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- viii. retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- ix. assist with responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the council's policies and procedures relating to the same;
- x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- xi. manage the organisation, storage of, access to and destruction of information held by the council in paper and electronic form;
- xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed; See also standing order 22 below.
- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the council in accordance with the council's financial Regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the council and the council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the council to the **Chairman or in his(her) absence the Vice-Chairman of the Council** within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the council;
- xvi. manage access to information about the council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the council (if any) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
See also standing order 22 below.

15. Responsible Financial Officer

a The council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

16. Accounts and accounting statements

a “Proper practices” in standing orders refer to the most recent version of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners’ Guide (England)

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 Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to Summarise:

- i. the council’s receipts and payments for each quarter;
- ii. the council’s aggregate receipts and payments for the year to date;
- iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:

- i. each councillor with a statement summarising the council’s receipts and payments for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
- ii. to the full council 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, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March. A completed draft annual return shall be presented to each councillor 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.

17. Financial controls and procurement

a The council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:

- i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;

- ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices 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
- b Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of Purpose.

18. Handling staff matters

- a A matter personal to the clerk that is being considered by a meeting of council is subject to standing order 12 above.
- b Subject to the council's policy regarding absences from work, the chair of the council or, if (s)he is not available, the vice-chairman shall report such absence at its next meeting.
- c The chairman or in his/her absence, the vice-chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and is subject to approval by resolution by the council
- d Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the chairman or in his/her absence, the vice-chairman in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of council.
- e Subject to the council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the clerk relates to the chairman or vice-chairman of the council, this shall be communicated to another member of the council, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the council.
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of the clerk shall treat the written records of all meetings relating to his performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters as confidential and secure.
- g The Chairman shall keep all written records relating to the clerk secure. All paper records shall be secured and locked and electronic records shall be password protected and encrypted.
- h Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to clerk records referred to in standing orders (g) above if so justified.

i Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 19(f) and (g) above shall be provided only to the Chairman of the Council

19. Requests for 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 to the chairman . **The said committee shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.**

20. Grant awarding

a. The Parish Council will consider grants from voluntary groups or charitable organisations. To qualify, the applicant must be able to demonstrate that funding will benefit the Parish, or residents of the Parish. Grants will normally only be considered twice a year by the full council, unless there are special circumstances which require more immediate consideration.

b. The Council sets its budget each year in **November** and that is when the total amount of grant money allocated for the forthcoming year will be agreed.

c. In determining the validity of an application, the Council will refer to the following guidelines:

d. Applications will be considered for the following purposes:

- I. To purchase equipment either in part or in full.
- II. For hosting special events or celebrations.
- III. For the provision of recreational facilities.

e. Conditions

- I. Grants will not usually be awarded to individuals.
- II. Additional applications within a 12 month period will not normally be considered
- III. The award must be used for the purpose for which the application was made.
- IV. Awards must be accounted for and evidence of expenditure should be supplied as requested. If the council is not satisfied that the grant has been spent as defined; they reserve the right to request a refund.
- V. Any grant must only be used for the purpose for which it was awarded unless the written approval of the Parish Council has been obtained for a change in use of the grant monies.

VI. Any unspent portion of the grant must be returned to the Parish Council within 6 months after the proposed end date of the project.

VII. An acknowledgment of the contribution should be made to the Parish Council and wherever possible, the Parish Council requests that reference is made to the grant in the organisation's annual accounts

VIII. This policy may be amended at any time by the Council following a motion having been published on the agenda.

f. Eligibility

a. Any Charity, Voluntary Group or Community Organisation operating within the parish and are of benefit to the local community, with the following provisos:

- i. The Parish Council will NOT fund activities that it considers to be the responsibility of a Statutory Authority.
- ii. Applications from schools for an activity that takes place within the school day will not be considered.
- iii. The Parish Council will not fund activities outside its powers and functions.

g. Submission of the Application

- I. Applications must be submitted to the Clerk at the address given above, preferably by the 1st of March and September of each year.
- II. The application form should be completed in block capitals and black ink.
- III. The application should be supported by a copy of the latest set of annual accounts.
- IV. The applicant should retain a copy of the form.

21. Communicating with District and County or Unitary councillors

a An invitation to attend a meeting of the council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of the District and County Council representing the area of the council.

b Unless the council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to the District and County Council to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the council.

22. Restrictions on councillor activities

a. Unless authorised by a resolution, no councillor shall:

- i. inspect any land and/or premises which the council has a right or duty to inspect; or
- ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

23. Standing orders generally

a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.

b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least **3** councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9 above.

c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible after he has delivered his acceptance of office form.

d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.