

CHURCHAM PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

MEETINGS

Meetings shall normally be held on the third Tuesday of the month in the evening and commence at 7.30pm

The place of meeting will normally be Churcham Primary School.

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 exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.

The public will be invited at the discretion of the parish council to speak on issues that concern them, but a strict time limit of 3 minutes will allowed.

The Chairman as elected shall preside when attending meetings; in his absence the elected Vice Chairman shall preside for that meeting only, if both are unavailable a councillor attending the meeting will be voted to preside.

Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors present at the meeting, subject to 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.

No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least 3 members of the council are present.

If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted.

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/she gave an original vote

A councillor shall only be elected to stand for a maximum of 4 continuous years as Chairman must stand down and make way for another councillor to be chairman.

He/she will not be permitted to hold the office of Chairman for at least another two years.

A councillor shall only be elected to stand as vice chairman for a maximum of 2 continuous years before he/she must stand down to make way for another councillor to gain experience. He/she will not be permitted to hold the office of vice chairman for at least another two years.

In an election year, the annual parish council meeting shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors are elected to take office.

In a year which is not an election year, the annual parish council meeting will normally be held in May each year, followed by the monthly meeting.

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

In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the council, he/she shall preside at the meeting until his/her successor has been elected. The current Chairman may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of a new Chairman but must not give a casting vote.

There will normally be 10 meetings per year. No meetings are held in August and December unless extraordinary meeting are called to discuss urgent planning permissions.

The Chairman or the Clerk can call an extraordinary meeting if matters of an urgent nature come up and must be dealt with before the next planned meeting, if they refuse 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 can 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.

Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is not permitted without the Parish Council's prior written consent.

PROPER OFFICER AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

This shall be the Clerk appointed by the members of the Council as and when the post becomes vacant and is given a contract and a job description.

The Clerk shall be appointed by the members and the terms of service shall comply with the recommendations of the National Association of Local Clerks for part time Clerks in that; -

{a} The salary for this Clerk shall be reviewed annually on the 1st April each year and will be subject to a minimum increase in line with the Retail Price Index, or the award made to local government officers, whichever is the greater, plus an increase in line with the Society of Local Clerk's benchmark for experience. The Clerk's hours of work will be up to 50 hours per month at no set times, some months will see more work than others and when the work is done shall be at the discretion of the Clerk.

{b} The Council will reimburse 50% of telephone line rental, and Broadband per month and the full cost of itemised calls made on behalf of the Parish Council, an annual computer allowance, and will also pay for membership of the Society of Local Clerk's plus a mileage allowance when on parish council business.

{c} The Council indemnify the Clerk against claims that may be made in respect of any act or omission by the Clerk if either

{1} The Clerks act or omission was reasonably intended for the protection or the furtherance of the interests of the Council.

{d} The offices of the Council shall be deemed to be situated at the private dwelling house of the Clerk, and the Council shall reimburse annually at an agreed rate reviewed annually and increased at the percentage rate of inflation on the 1st January each year, for the use as an office to comply with this requirement.

{e} The Contract of appointment of the Clerk shall be determined at any time by two calendar month notice in writing to the Chairman by either the Clerk or by a vote of the full Council.

DUTIES OF THE CLERK

{1} To receive Declarations of Acceptance of Office.

{2} to attend as many duly convened meetings as possible of the Council and to keep the minutes. The parish Council will find another qualified clerk to take over for the meetings the clerk is unable to attend.

{3} Dispatch promptly all such notices, letters and other documents, as the transaction of the business of the Council shall require.

{4} Keep safely and conveniently in secure but accessible custody all deeds, plans, records, letters and other documents concerning the Council.

{5} Sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council.

{6} Monitor and balance the Councils accounts and prepare records for audit purposes and VAT.

{7} Advise the Council on policy matters, and guide the Chairman on procedural matters.

{8} to make day-to-day decisions on behalf of the Parish Council to ensure the smooth running of the Council, and to keep the Chairman informed of such decisions.

EXPENDITURE

Orders for payment of money shall be authorised by resolution of the Council and signed by two members.

The Parish Council instruct that the Clerk has the authority to transfer money between the two bank accounts to ensure that there is sufficient funds for the payment of cheques to avoid bank charges on unauthorised overdrafts.

QUORUM

A minimum of three members shall constitute a quorum. Should no quorum be attained the business not transacted shall be carried forward to the next meeting. {This would include a situation where a meeting becomes inquorate owing to a member leaving the meeting following a declaration of interest.

VOTING

Members may vote by a show of hands unless two or more request a written ballot, when the names of members and their voting preference shall be recorded in the Minutes of the Meeting. The Chairman may give an original vote plus a casting vote if necessary in any written ballot.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

At the Annual Parish Council Meeting which will be held each May councillors will elect a Chairman and then to receive his/her Declaration of Acceptance of Office. The next business will be to appoint a Vice Chairman. Thereafter normal business will take place.

The Clerk will prepare an agenda for every meeting. A member requiring a special item to be discussed at any meeting may request the Clerk to give notice on the Agenda; request should be in writing and sent to the Clerk ten clear days prior to a meeting.

The Annual Parish Council Meeting will be held each April. The Chairman will report on the Parish perspective, the District and County Councillors will each report on the past year from their perspectives and the Police will give a report on incidents in the Parish and locally. Written questions by members of the public must be sent to the Clerk at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

MEMBERS INTEREST

A member with a pecuniary interest in any business being transacted shall declare it and shall leave the meeting during consideration. Notice of such declaration must be recorded in the Minutes.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

The Council may by resolution conduct certain items of business in private session. All business shall be conducted within the framework of the Local Government Act 1972 and its amendments.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All Councillors accept the Model Code of Conduct for Parish and Town Councils Order 2007 No 1159 including 12{2}

Where Councillors have a prejudicial interest in any business of this authority they may attend the meeting but only for the purpose of making representation, answering

questions or giving evidence relating to the business, providing that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under statutory right or otherwise then they will leave the meeting while a decision is made.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS.

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 will request such person{s} to moderate or improve their conduct. 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 and should be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion. If a resolution made under this standing order is ignored by the disruptive person{s}, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES.

Unless the council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee. The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the council. Unless the council determines otherwise, all members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.

Signed by the Chairman.....

Dated.....