



## Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

# STANDING ORDERS

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# MEETINGS

## COUNCIL

### 1 **Ordinary Meetings of the Council**

The Council shall in every year hold an Annual Meeting within the period fixed by statute for the purpose of electing a Mayor and a Deputy Mayor for the ensuing year and such other business as is required by statute to be done. The Council shall meet at 7 p.m. on Wednesdays on other occasions in the year.

### 2 **Special Meetings of the Council**

- (1) The Mayor may call a Special meeting of the Council at any time.
- (2) If the Mayor refuses to call a Special meeting of the Council after a requisition for that purpose signed by two members of the Council has been presented to him/her, or if, without so refusing, does not call a Special meeting within seven days after such a requisition has been presented to him/her, any two members of the Council, on that refusal or on the expiration of seven days as the case may be, may forthwith convene a Special meeting of the Council.

### 3 **Chairman of Meeting**

- (a) Unless disqualified from doing so, the Mayor, if present, shall preside at all meetings of the Council.
- (b) In the absence of the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor shall preside over Meetings of the Council. If the Deputy Mayor be absent also, the Council shall elect one of their number to be Chairman of the meeting. Any power or duty assigned to the Mayor in relation to the conduct of a meeting may be exercised by the person presiding at the meeting.

### 4 **Proper Officer**

Where a statute, regulation or order confers functions or duties on the Proper Officer of the Council in the following cases, he/she shall be the Town Clerk.

- (a) To receive declarations of acceptance of office.
- (b) To receive and record notices disclosing personal interests.

- (c) To receive and retain plans and documents.
- (d) To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council.
- (e) To receive copies of bye-laws made by a district council.
- (f) To certify copies of bye-laws made by the Council.
- (g) To sign summonses to attend meetings of the Council.
- (h) To act as the Council's Responsible Financial Officer in accordance with section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Other functions or duties may be delegated to the Town Clerk as Proper Officer.

## 5 **Quorum**

One third of the members shall constitute a quorum.

If a quorum is not present when the Council meets or if during a meeting the number of councillors present falls below the quorum, the business not transacted at that meeting shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Mayor or Chairman (see paragraph 3(b)) may fix.

## 6 **Voting**

Members shall vote by show of hands, or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot.

A member may request that a record is made regarding their vote for or against any question as long as the request is made before the matter is put to the vote.

If before a vote is taken three members so require the Clerk shall record the names of the members who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it.

The Chairman may vote on any matter and in the case of an equality of votes, the Chairman may give a second or casting vote.

## 7 **Order of Business**

(In an election year Councillors should execute Declarations of Acceptance of Office in the presence of a Proper Officer previously authorised by the Council to take such declarations before the annual meeting commences).

- (1) Except when the Council on the ground of urgency vary the order of

business in accordance with part (2) of this standing order, the order of business at every meeting of the Council shall be:

- (a) To choose a person to preside if the Mayor and Deputy Mayor be absent.
  - (b) Any business required by statute to be done before any other business including declarations of interest.
  - (c) To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting(s) of the Council.
  - (d) Any correspondence, communications or other business specially brought forward by direction of the Mayor.
  - (e) To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.
  - (f) To answer questions asked pursuant to Standing Order 10.
  - (g) To dispose of business (if any) remaining from the last meeting.
  - (h) To receive and consider reports of Committees as defined in and in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 12.
  - (i) To receive and consider reports of representatives of the Council on other bodies.
  - (j) To consider notices of motion in the order in which they have been received.
  - (k) To receive and consider reports from officers of the Council.
  - (l) To transact other business (if any) specified in the agenda or of which notice has been given.
- (2) The Council may at any meeting vary the order of business so as to give precedence to any item of business, but such a variation shall not displace business falling under items (a),(b),(c) and (d) in part 1 of this standing order.

## 8 **Notices of Motion**

Except as provided by Standing Order 9 every notice of motion shall either be in writing, signed by the member of the Council giving the notice or be delivered electronically by e-mail. In either case the motion should be delivered not later than 5 p.m. on Tuesday in the week before the next ordinary meeting of the Council, at the office of the Town Clerk by whom it shall be dated, numbered in the order in which it is received, and entered in a book which shall be open to inspection of any member of the Council.

The Town Clerk shall insert in the summons for every meeting of the Council all notices of motion duly given in the order in which they have been received unless the member giving such notice has, when giving it, intimated in writing that he/she proposes to move it at some later meeting or has withdrawn it in writing.

If a motion, notice of which has been specified in the summons, be not moved either by the member who has given the notice, or by some other member on his/her behalf, it shall, unless postponed by leave of the Council, be treated as abandoned and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

When a notice of motion duly given under this standing order has been moved and seconded, the Mayor shall, before the mover and seconder have spoken thereto, ascertain the wishes of the Council as to whether it is considered expedient for it to be debated forthwith or if it should stand referred to any, and if so, what committee.

Every notice of motion shall be relevant to some question over which the Council have power or which affects the Town.

## 9 **Motions which may be moved without Notice**

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

- (a) To appoint a Chairman of the meeting.
- (b) To correct the minutes.
- (c) To approve the minutes.
- (d) To alter the order of business.
- (e) To proceed to the next business.
- (f) To close or adjourn the debate.
- (g) To refer a matter to a committee.
- (h) To appoint a committee or any members thereof.

- (i) To adopt a report.
- (j) To authorise the sealing of documents.
- (k) To amend a motion.
- (l) To give leave to withdraw a motion or an amendment.
- (m) To extend the time limit for speeches.
- (n) To consider other than in confidential session a matter specifically affecting an employee of the Council.
- (o) To exclude the press and the public.
- (p) To silence or to eject from a meeting a member named for misconduct.
- (q) To give the consent of the Council where such consent is required by these Standing Orders.
- (r) To suspend Standing Orders.

10 **Questions**

- (1) A member of the Council may:
  - (a) Ask the Mayor or Chairman of any committee any question relating to the business of the Council provided that such question has been set out in writing and delivered to the Town Clerk not less than two clear working days before the meeting;  
  
and
  - (b) With the permission of the Mayor put to him/her or to the Chairman of any Committee questions relating to urgent business, of which such notice has not been given, but a copy of any such question shall be sent to the Town Clerk not later than two o'clock in the afternoon of the day of the meeting.
- (2) Every question shall be put and answered without discussion, but the person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer.
- (3) Where a written question is addressed to the Mayor or to the Chairman of a Committee and the desired information is contained in any of the Council's publications, it shall be deemed a sufficient reply if the publication containing the information is indicated.

- (4) Where the reply to any question cannot conveniently be given orally it shall be deemed a sufficient reply if the answer is subsequently circulated to members of the Council.
- (5) Supplementary questions are not allowed to be asked.

## 11 Minutes

As soon as the minutes have been read or if they are under Standing Order 7 (1) (c) taken as read, the Mayor shall put the question that the minutes of the previous meeting(s) of the Council be signed as a true record.

No motion or discussion shall take place upon the minutes except upon their accuracy and any question of their accuracy shall be raised by motion and if no such question is raised, or if it is raised, then as soon as it has been disposed of the Mayor shall sign the minutes.

**Matters Arising** - Members may ask questions to items contained within the minutes provided that the item is not already covered at another place on the Agenda/ Committee Report, but no vote can be taken to alter a decision taken at the previous Council meeting.

## 12 Presentation of Draft Committee Minutes

- (1) At each ordinary meeting of the Council every Standing Committee shall present reports in the form of the whole of the draft minutes of any meetings held since the previous ordinary meeting of the Council, but this shall not be deemed to prevent the presentation of a particular item within the minutes in narrative form where this is considered desirable by the committee Chairman.
- (2) Such draft committee minutes shall be printed in two sections. The first section shall consist of matters which are to be considered in open Council. The second section shall consist of matters which the Committee deem to be confidential, i.e. which it would not be in the public interest to disclose at that stage, and shall be printed on pink/red paper.
- (3) Such reports shall if practicable be circulated with the notice convening the meeting.
- (4) Before consideration of the report of a committee, the Chairman of that committee, or other member having charge of such report, shall submit a motion for its adoption which, having been seconded, shall be discussed and dealt with by the Council.

When an amendment is proposed with reference to the adoption or confirmation of acts and proceedings of any committee, the subject of such amendment shall be discussed and disposed of before the other acts and proceedings of such committee are considered.

- (5) In moving the adoption of a report the mover is deemed to have moved the report in its entirety and all paragraphs and recommendations contained therein shall be

deemed to have been adopted unless any amendment thereto is moved.

- (6) Paragraphs which do not contain recommendations and relate to matters specifically and fully delegated to Standing Committees may be discussed but no motion shall be considered other than a motion as to the future conduct of a committee in such matters.

### 13 Rules of Debate

- (a) A resolution or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded, and unless proper notice has already been given, it shall, if required by the Mayor, be committed to writing and handed to him/her before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.
- (b) A member when seconding a resolution or amendment may, if he/she then declare his/her intention to do so, reserve his/her speech until a later period of the debate.
- (c) A member shall direct his/her speech to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a question of order.
- (d) No speech shall exceed five minutes, except by consent of the Council.
- (e) An amendment shall be either:
  - i) To leave out words.
  - ii) To leave out words and insert or add others.
  - iii) To insert or add words.
- (f) An amendment shall not have the effect of negating the motion before the Council.
- (g) 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.
- (h) If an amendment be not be carried, other amendments may be moved to the original motion. A further amendment shall not be moved until the Council has disposed of every amendment previously moved.
- (i) The mover of a resolution or of an amendment shall have a right of reply.
- (j) A member, other than the mover of a resolution, shall not, without leave of the Council, speak more than once on any resolution. However, that member may move an amendment or further amendment, or speak on an amendment, or on a point of order, or in personal explanation, or move the closure.



- (k) A member may rise to make a point of order or a personal explanation. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by him/her which may have been misunderstood. A member rising for these purposes shall be heard forthwith.
- (l) A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the unanimous consent of the Council, which shall be signified without discussion, and no member may speak upon it after permission has been asked for its withdrawal unless such permission has been refused.
- (m) When a resolution is under debate no other resolution shall be moved except the following:
  - i) To amend the resolution.
  - ii) To proceed to the next business.
  - iii) To adjourn the debate.
  - iv) That the question be now put.
  - v) That a member named be not further heard.
  - vi) That a member named does leave the meeting as a result of their disorderly conduct.
  - vii) That the resolution be referred to a committee.
  - viii) To exclude the public and the press.
  - ix) To adjourn the meeting.
- (n) A member shall stand when speaking unless permitted by the Mayor to sit on account of infirmity.
  - i) The ruling of the Mayor on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.
  - ii) Members shall address the Mayor.
  - iii) If two or more members rise, the Mayor shall call upon one of them to speak and the others shall resume their seats.
  - iv) Whenever the Mayor rises during a debate all other members shall be seated and silent.

**14 Closure**

At the end of any speech a member may, without comment, move "that the question be now put", "that the debate be now adjourned" or "that the Council do now adjourn". If such motion is seconded and if the Mayor is of the opinion that the question before the Council has been sufficiently debated (but not otherwise), he/she shall forthwith put the motion. If the motion "that the question be now put" is carried, he/she shall call upon the mover to exercise or waive his/her right of reply and shall put the question immediately after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the Council shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

**15 Right of Reply**

The proposer of a motion shall have a right to reply at the close of debate upon such motion, immediately before it is put to the vote, or before the motion "that the debate be now adjourned", "that the Council proceed to the next business", or "that the Council do now adjourn", is put. If an amendment is proposed the mover of the original motion shall be entitled to reply at the close of the debate upon the amendment. In exercising the right of reply the mover of the original motion shall not introduce a new matter. After every reply to which this Standing Order refers a decision shall be taken without further discussion.

**16 Alteration of Motion**

A member may with the consent of his/her seconder and of the Council, signified without discussion, alter a motion which he/she has proposed or of which notice has been given if the alteration is one which could have been moved as an amendment thereto.

**17 Rescission of Previous Resolution**

- (a) A decision of the Council shall not be reversed within six months save by a special resolution, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least six members of the Council.
- (b) When a special resolution has been disposed of, no similar resolution may be moved within a further six months.
- (c) This Standing Order shall not apply to resolutions moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.

**18 Power to Resolve into a Committee**

If in the opinion of the Council business would be better transacted in terms of the rules of debate by operating as a committee, the Council may at any time resolve itself into a committee of the whole Council.

**19 Voting on Appointments**

Where two persons have been nominated for any position to be filled by the Council, the appointment shall be decided by a simple majority. Where more than two persons have been nominated and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority in favour of one person, 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.

**20 Motions Affecting Persons Employed by the Council**

If any question arises at a meeting of the Council as to the appointment, promotion, dismissal, salary, or conditions of service or the conduct of any person employed by the Council, it shall be considered by the Council in confidential session (in accordance with Standing Orders 24 and 25). Any staff junior in grade, and any member of staff under discussion, shall leave the meeting during discussion of that item.

**21 Motions on Expenditure**

Any motion which is moved otherwise than in pursuance of a recommendation of the Finance and General Purposes Committee or of another committee after recommendation by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and which, if carried, would, in the opinion of the Mayor, increase the expenditure upon any service which is under the management by more than £1,000 or reduce the revenue at the disposal of any committee, or which would involve capital expenditure in excess of £1,000 shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council. Any committee affected by it shall consider whether it desires to report thereon. The Finance and General Purposes Committee shall report on the financial aspect of the matter.

**22 Suspension of Sitting**

If after a motion under Standing Order 23 has been carried and misconduct or obstruction is continued, and in the opinion of the Mayor renders the due and orderly despatch of business impossible, the Mayor in addition to any other powers vested in he/she may, without question put, adjourn or suspend the sitting of the Council for such period as he/she in his/her discretion shall consider expedient.

**23 Disorderly Conduct**

If at a meeting any member of the Council, in the opinion of the Mayor, misconducts himself/herself by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair, or by behaving irregularly, improperly or offensively, or by wilfully obstructing the business of the Council it shall be competent for a member to move "that the member named be not further heard" or "that the member named do leave the meeting" and the motion if seconded shall be put and

determined without discussion.

**24 Admission of the Public and Press to Meetings**

- (a) The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees. Council and committee meetings may, however, temporarily exclude the public or the press or both by means of the following resolution:  
“That in accordance with section 1 (2) of the public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.”
- (b) Subject to Standing Order 24 (a) above, members of the public are permitted to make representations, ask questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda for any meeting of the Council (with the exception of the Annual Meeting) and its standing committees, in accordance with the Council’s code of practice in relation to public participation.

**25 Confidential Business**

No member of the Council or of any committee, sub-committee or working party shall disclose to any person not a member of the Council any business declared to be confidential by the Council, the committee, the sub-committee or working party as the case may be.

Any decision of the Council or of any committee, sub-committee or working party shall be communicated only by a person nominated by these bodies. Unless otherwise specified the Town Clerk shall communicate such decisions.

**26 Sealing of Documents**

The Common Seal of the Council shall not be affixed to any documents unless the sealing has been authorised by a resolution of the Council or of a committee to which the Council have delegated their powers in this behalf, but a resolution of the Council (or of a committee where that committee has the power) authorising the acceptance of any tender, the purchase, sale, letting or taking of any property, the issue of any stock, the presentation of any petition, memorial, or address, the making of any rate, or any other matter or thing, shall be sufficient authority for sealing any document necessary to give effect to the resolution.

The seal shall be attested by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, or any member of the Council and the Town Clerk; an entry of every sealing of a document shall be made and consecutively numbered in a book to be provided for the purpose and shall be signed by the person or by persons who shall have attested the seal.

**27 Signature of Documents**

Where any document will be a necessary step in legal proceedings on behalf of the Council it shall be signed by the Town Clerk, unless any enactment otherwise requires or authorises or the Council shall have given the necessary authority to some other person for the purpose of such

**28 Inspection of Documents**

A member may for the purpose of his/her duty as such (but not otherwise), inspect any document in possession of the Council or a committee, and if copies are available shall, on request, be supplied for the like purpose with a copy.

- (a) All minutes kept by the Council and by any committee shall be open for the inspection of any member of the Council.
- (b) The minutes of the Council and its Committees shall be open to inspection by any elector for the area, with the exception of confidential minutes.

**29 Authorised Activities**

No member of the Council or of any committee or sub-committee shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council:

Inspect any lands or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect or Issue orders unless authorised to do so by the Council or the relevant committee or sub-committee.

**30 Contracts**

- (a) Every contract whether made by the council or by a committee to which the power of making contracts has been delegated, shall comply with these standing orders, and no exception from any of the following provisions of these standing orders shall be made otherwise than by direction of the council or in an emergency by such a committee as mentioned. These standing orders shall not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (v) below:
  - i) For the supply of gas, electricity, water sewerage and telephone services.
  - ii) For specialist services such as those provided by solicitors, accounts, surveyors and planning consultants.
  - iii) For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment or plant.

- iv) For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council.
  - v) For goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and/or which are sold only at a fixed price.
- (b) Where it is intended to enter into a contract:
- i) Exceeding £50,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Town Clerk shall invite tenders from at least three firms.
  - ii) For expenditures of between £5,000 and £50,000 the Chairman of the spending committee or the appointed Vice-Chairman together with the Town Clerk shall have executive power. Three quotations are recommended in such circumstances but the Town Clerk and the Chairman/Vice Chairman of the relevant committee shall have absolute discretion to waive this recommendation if deemed to be necessary.

When applications are made to waive Standing Orders relating to contracts to enable a tender to be negotiated without competition, the reason shall be embodied in the resolution of the Council.

- (c) Every exception made by a committee to which the power of making contracts has been delegated shall be reported to the council and the report shall specify the emergency by which the exception shall have been justified.
- (d) All invitations to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contract and the Town Clerk shall obtain any necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state that tenders must be addressed to the Town Clerk and the last date by which such tenders should reach the Town Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering firm shall be supplied with a specially marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed and remain sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- (e) All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Town Clerk in the presence of at least one member of the Council.
- (f) If fewer than three tenders are received for contracts valued above £50,000 or if all the tenders are identical the Council may make such arrangements as it considers appropriate for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
- (g) The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender. However, where it is proposed not to accept the lowest tender, the committee or council, as appropriate, will set out a justification for the decision within the resolution to accept a higher tender.

- (h) A register shall be kept of all tenders and quotations, which have been requested and received under this Standing Order.

**31 Expenditure**

The Council's control of expenditure shall be governed by its Financial Regulations.

All cheques for payments will be drawn on an Abingdon Town Council Payments Account, and all receipts deposited into the Current Account.

All cheques shall be signed by two Members of the Council. All such payments shall be detailed on a monthly schedule and these schedules shall be presented to the next meeting of the Council's Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee shall be authorised to approve expenditure up to a maximum of £1,000 for which budgetary provision has not been made and where the matter is considered by him/her to be too urgent to wait for the appropriate Committee.

All orders shall be issued by the officers of the Council in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

**32 Code of conduct and Interests**

All councillors shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.

**33 Canvassing of and Recommendations by Members**

- (a) Canvassing of members, directly or indirectly for any appointment under the Council shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Town Clerk shall make known the purport of this sub-paragraph of this Standing Order to every candidate.
- (b) A member of the Council shall not solicit for any person any appointment under the Council or recommend any person for such appointment or for promotion.
- (c) Persons submitting tenders to the Council shall not solicit members in any way.

**34 Variation, Revocation and Suspension of Standing Orders**

- (1) Subject to part (2) of this Standing Order, any of the preceding Standing Orders may be suspended so far as regards any business at the meeting where its suspension is moved.
- (2) A motion to suspend Standing Orders shall not be moved under Standing Order 9

unless:

- i) There shall be present at least one-half of the whole number of members of the Council.
  - ii) To avoid any statutory provision incorporated within these Standing Orders or otherwise in connection with the conduct of the Council.
  - iii) To nullify any acts or proceedings of a Standing Committee already undertaken by them as a result of delegated powers.
- (3) A permanently to vary or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council motion.

### **35 Places of Meeting**

Meetings of the Council and of all committees, sub-committees and working parties other than site committees, shall be held within the Guildhall or the Old Abbey House.

### **36 Attendance**

Every member attending a meeting of the Council, Committee or Sub-Committee, shall sign his/her name in the attendance book or on the attendance sheet provided for that purpose.

### **37 Seating at Council Meetings**

Seating arrangements shall not be prescribed except at the Annual Meeting when members shall sit according to their seniority of election to the Council.

## **COMMITTEES**

### **38 Committees**

- (1) The Council shall, at its Annual Meeting, appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as may be necessary, and:
  - (a) Shall determine their terms of reference;
  - (b) May permit committees to determine the dates of their meetings;
  - (c) Shall appoint and determine the term of office of councillor or non-councillor members of such a committee (unless the appointment of non-councillors is prohibited by law) so as to hold office no later than the next annual meeting;



- (d) Shall at each annual meeting appoint a Finance and General Purposes Committee;
- (e) Membership of Committees and Sub-Committees shall take into account the spirit of the provision of Section 15 (4) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, concerning the allocation of places between representatives of any political groups.

(2) Chairman

If any Chairman is unable to attend any particular meeting of the committee he/she may be represented at the meeting by his/her Vice-Chairman.

(3) Mayor

The Mayor shall be an ex-officio voting member of every Standing Committee. The Mayor shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of all other Sub-Committees and Working Parties appointed by the Council.

(4) Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee

The Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee shall be an ex-officio voting member of every Standing Committee. The Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of all other Sub-Committees and Working Parties/ Groups appointed by the Council.

- (5) The Council may make a scheme for the terms of reference and delegation to Council committees, sub-committees and working groups/ parties.

**39 Election of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees**

- (a) Every committee shall, at its first meeting, before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the year, in whose absence from the meeting a Chairman for the meeting may be appointed.
- (b) No member of the Council shall be Chairman of more than one Standing Committee of the Council at one and the same time.
- (c) The Mayor shall not be Chairman of any Standing Committee.

**40 Special Meetings of Committees**

The Chairman of a committee or the Mayor may summon a special meeting of the committee at any time. A special meeting shall also be summoned on the requisition in writing of one third of the members of the committee.

The summons shall set out the business to be considered at the special meeting, and no other business than that set out shall be considered at that meeting unless the committee so resolve.

**41 Quorum of Committees and Sub-Committees**

Except where authorised by statute or ordered by the Council, business shall not be transacted at a meeting of any committee, and except as aforesaid or otherwise ordered by the committee which has appointed a sub-committee or working party, business shall not be transacted at a meeting of a sub-committee or working party, unless one-third of the whole number of the committee, sub-committee or working party is present. Provided that in no case shall the quorum of a committee be less than three members or of a sub-committee or working party two members.

For the purposes of the calculation of the quorum, the Mayor and the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee shall be included where they are ex-officio members of the committee or ex-officio voting members of the Audit and Performance Sub-Committee, but not for all other sub-committees and working parties, where they are non-voting members.

Co-opted members are not included in the calculation of the quorum.

**42 Sub-Committees**

Every committee appointed by the Council may appoint sub-committees for purposes to be specified by the committee. Except where powers or duties are delegated to a sub-committee who acts in pursuance of any statutory enactment need not be submitted to the committee for approval, no acts of a sub-committee shall have effect until approved by the committee.

The Chairman or Vice-Chairman, if any, of the committee shall be a member of every sub-committee appointed by that committee, unless they signify in writing to the Town Clerk that they do not wish to serve.

**43 Voting in Committees**

All questions in committee shall be determined by show of hands by a majority of the members of the committee present and voting. In case of equality of votes the Chairman of every committee meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

**44 Standing Orders to Apply to Committees**

Standing Order 13 of the Council headed "Rules of Debate" (except those parts which relate to standing and speaking more than once) and Standing Order 32 headed "Interests" shall

*mutatis mutandis* apply to committee, sub-committee and working party meetings.

**45 Presence of Non-Members of Committees at Committee Meetings**

A member who has proposed a motion which has been referred to any committee of which he/she is not a member, may explain his/her motion to the committee but shall not vote.

Any Council member shall, unless the Council otherwise orders, be entitled to be present as a spectator at the meetings of any committee or sub-committee of which he/she is not a member, but not entitled to speak unless invited to do so by the Chairman. However any Councillor may speak at Committee meetings on any matters related specifically to his/her Ward.

**46 Planning Applications**

- (a) The Town Clerk shall, as soon as it is received, record the following particulars of every planning application notified to the Council:
  - i) The date on which it was received;
  - ii) The name of the applicant;
  - iii) The place to which it relates;
  - iv) A summary of the nature of the application.
- (b) The Town Clerk shall refer every planning application to the next following Planning and Highways Committee.

**PARISH MEETINGS**

**47 Parish Meeting**

A parish meeting shall be held annually between the 1st March and the 1st June inclusive and at such other times as the Council may determine as required by statute.

**48 Special Parish Meetings**

A special parish meeting may be convened at any time by:

- (a) The Mayor.
- (b) Any two Councillors.

- (c) Any six local government electors for the parish.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

### **49 Representation on Outside Bodies**

The appointment of members of the Council to act on other bodies for the period specified in the regulations of such bodies shall (so far as the law allows) be subject to the condition that such appointment shall end if the member appointed ceases to be a member of the Council.

### **50 Seniority**

Seniority of members shall be determined by the length of continuous service on the Town Council except that in the case of more than one new member being elected at the same time seniority shall be based on the number of votes cast for the members, as expressed by the formula total number of votes cast divided by number of seats in the ward.

### **51 Civic Ceremonial**

At all ceremonial processions members will proceed in descending order of seniority.

### **52 Working Parties**

The Council may make rules and formulate procedures for the constitution and regulation of Working Parties.

### **53 Distribution of Standing Orders**

A printed copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each member of the Council by the Town Clerk upon delivery to him/her of the member's declaration of acceptance of office.