

WOODHALL SPA PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

**ADOPTED: 20 NOVEMBER 2012
MINUTE REF: 7304**

**REVIEWED: 17 DECEMBER 2013, MINUTE REF: 7972
REVIEWED: 20 MAY 2014, MINUTE REF: 8229C.
AMENDED: 12 AUGUST 2014, MINUTE REF: 8358
AMENDED: 16 JUNE 2015, MINUTE REF: 8968B.
AMENDED: 19 JANUARY 2016, MINUTE REF: 9307
REVIEWED: 19 JULY 2016, MIN REF: 9687a.**

Index

No.	Page
1. Meetings.....	3
2. Annual meeting of the Council.....	5
3. Ordinary meetings of the Council.....	6
4. Proper Officer.....	6
5. Motions requiring written notice.....	7
6. Motions not requiring written notice.....	8
7. Rules of debate.....	8
8. Code of conduct	10
9. Code of conduct complaints	11
10. Minutes	11
11. Disorderly conduct.....	12
12. Rescission of previous resolutions.....	12
13. Voting on appointments.....	12
14. Expenditure.....	12
15. Execution and sealing of legal deeds	13
16. Committees	13
17. Sub-committees	13
18. Extraordinary meetings	14
19. Advisory committees	14
20. Accounts and financial statement.....	14
21. Estimates/precepts.....	15
22. Canvassing of and recommendations by councillors.....	15
23. Inspection of documents.....	15
24. Unauthorised activities.....	15
25. Confidential business	15
26. Relations with Press/Media.....	16
27. Freedom of Information Act 2000.....	16
28. Liaison with District and County Councillors.....	16
29. Application, variation, suspension revocation of standing orders.....	16
30. Matters affecting council employees.....	17
31. Standing orders to be given to councillors.....	17

Bold text in this document indicates statutory requirements. These should not be ignored or substantively amended by the Parish Council unless the legislation out of which they are born changes.

References to the male gender should be taken as referring to both the male and female gender.

1. Meetings

- 1.1 **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.**
- 1.2 Council meetings shall take place on the third Tuesday of each month (except August) at 7.30pm in the Council offices, unless agreed by resolution of the Council at least two months in advance.
- 1.3 Requests for items to be included on the agenda must be provided in writing (including via email) to the Parish Clerk at least 7 clear days before the meeting.
- 1.4 The Chairman and the Parish Clerk are responsible for ensuring that the agenda for a meeting is kept to a reasonable length so that business can be dealt with in a reasonable amount of time.
- 1.5 **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.**
- 1.6 **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.**
- 1.7 Subject to standing order 1.6 above, members of the public present at a meeting may make representations, ask questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda for that meeting during the time set aside for public participation.
- 1.8 The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing order 1.7 above shall not exceed 15 minutes, unless it states otherwise on the agenda.
- 1.9 Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Chairman.
- 1.10 A record will be made in the minutes of each meeting of the issues raised during public participation.
- 1.11 In accordance with standing order 1.7 above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate.
- 1.12 In accordance with standing order 1.11 above, the Chairman may request that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to an employee for a written or oral response.
- 1.13 **In accordance with standing order 1.6 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.**
- 1.14 **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.

- 1.15 **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 chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- 1.16 **All questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.**
- 1.17 **The Chairman 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.**
- 1.18 **Voting on any question shall be by a show of hands.** Any councillor can request that the way in which he voted is recorded in the minutes. **At the request of two Councillors, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present voted and whether their vote was for or against that question.** Such requests listed above shall be made before the vote is taken.
- 1.19 **The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present.**
- 1.20 Apologies for absence at a meeting and whether the reasons given for absence was accepted shall be recorded in the minutes.
- 1.21 **The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors and voting non-councillors in respect of the entire meeting.**
- 1.22 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 only if it had not already been declared to the Monitoring Officer at East Lindsey District Council.
- 1.23 **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 that at least three councillors are present.** The quorum for Woodhall Spa Parish Council is four.
- 1.24 **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be adjourned. Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be transacted at a following meeting.
- 1.25 Meetings should not exceed a period of two hours. When a meeting reaches two hours a majority vote in favour of continuing is required for the meeting to continue. Otherwise any business on the agenda not discussed at that stage shall be held over to the next meeting.

2. Annual meeting of the Council

- 2.1 **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.**
- 2.2 **In a year that is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.**
- 2.3 **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 7.30pm.**
- 2.4 **The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.**
- 2.5 **The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected.**
- 2.6 **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council.**
- 2.7 **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a successor 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.**
- 2.8 **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. 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.**
- 2.9 Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council the order of business at the annual meeting shall be as follows:
 - a. To receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.
 - b. In an election year, to receive declarations of acceptance of office and to decide when any declarations of acceptance of office which have not been so received shall be received.
 - c. To appoint members onto committees, working groups and as representatives to outside bodies
 - d. To confirm and sign the minutes of the last meeting of the Council.
 - e. In a year of elections, if a Council's period of eligibility to exercise the General Power of Competence expired the day before the annual meeting, to review and make arrangements to reaffirm eligibility.
 - f. To transact such other business as the Council may determine.

3. Ordinary meetings of the Council

- 3.1 The business to be conducted at ordinary meetings of the Council shall be as follows:
- a. If the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be absent, to appoint a councillor as Chairman for the meeting.
 - b. To receive declarations of acceptance of office (if any) and to decide when any declarations of acceptance of office which have not been so received shall be received.
 - c. To confirm and sign the minutes of the last meeting of the Council.
 - d. To receive reports from the clerk and councillors on matters outstanding.
 - e. To receive reports from district and county councillors.
 - f. To receive the notes of committee meetings.
 - g. To consider motions or recommendations in the order in which they have been notified.
 - h. To consider any other business specified in the agenda accompanying the summons to the meeting.
 - i. To receive a report from representatives on outside bodies/working groups.
 - j. To receive correspondence.
 - k. Items for the next agenda.
 - l. Dates and times of next meetings.
- 3.2 A motion to vary the order of business as specified in the agenda on the grounds of urgency:
- a) may be proposed by the Chairman or by any member and, if proposed by the Chairman, may be put to a vote without being seconded; and
 - b) shall be put to a vote without discussion.

4. Proper Officer

- 4.1 The Council's Proper Officer shall be either:
- (i) the clerk or such other employee as may be nominated by the Council from time to time or
 - (ii) such other employee appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence.
- 4.2 The Proper Officer and the employee appointed to act as such during the Proper Officer's absence shall fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer in standing orders.
- 4.3 The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following:
- a. Electronically serve on councillors a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council and a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee, provided any such email contains the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer. This must be done at least 3 clear days before the meeting.
 - b. **Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**
 - c. Include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 7 days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it.
 - d. **Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office, in accordance with**

standing order 4.3 a. or b. above.

- e. Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.
- f. **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
- g. **Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.**
- h. Retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
- i. Keep proper records required before and after meetings.
- j. Process all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the Council's procedures relating to the same.
- k. Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.
- l. Manage the organisation, storage of and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form, which includes ensuring that the Parish Council website is up to date.
- m. Arrange for legal deeds to be executed (see also Standing Order 15).
- n. Arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- o. Following a decision by the Planning Committee, provide a response to the local planning authority on each planning application received.
- p. Retain custody of the seal of the Council (if any) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
- q. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders.
- r. Manage access to information about the Council via the Publication Scheme.

5. Motions requiring prior notice

- 5.1 No motion may be moved at a meeting unless the business to which it relates is included in the agenda or the mover has given notice of its wording to the Council's Proper Officer at least seven clear days before the meeting.
- 5.2 The Proper Officer may, before including a motion in the agenda received in accordance with standing order 5.1 above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- 5.3 If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or 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.
- 5.4 A written record of every notice of motion received in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be recorded by the Proper Officer.
- 5.5 A written record of every motion rejected in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be recorded with a note by the Proper Officer giving reasons for its rejection.
- 5.6 Every motion and resolution shall relate to the Council's statutory functions, powers and lawful obligations or shall relate to an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

6. Motions not requiring prior notice

- 6.1 Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice:
- a. To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
 - b. To approve the absences of councillors.
 - c. To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - d. To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - e. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
 - f. To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
 - g. To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
 - h. To close or adjourn debate.
 - i. To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee.
 - j. To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any councillors (including substitutes) thereto.
 - k. To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
 - l. To dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
 - m. To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee.
 - n. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub-committee or an employee.
 - o. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
 - p. To authorise legal deeds to be sealed by the Council's common seal
 - q. To authorise the payment of monies.
 - r. To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
 - s. To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
 - t. To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
 - u. To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders.
 - v. **To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law.**
 - w. To adjourn the meeting.
 - x. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
 - y. To answer questions from councillors.
- 6.2 If a motion falls within the terms of reference of a committee or sub-committee or within the delegated powers conferred on an employee, a referral of the same may be made to such committee or sub-committee or employee provided that the Chairman may direct for it to be dealt with at the present meeting for reasons of urgency or expedience.

7. Rules of debate

- 7.1 Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chairman's direction for reasons of expedience.
- 7.2 Subject to standing order 6.1 above, a motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- 7.3 A motion included in an agenda not moved by the councillor who tabled it may be treated as withdrawn.

- 7.4 A motion to amend an original or substantive motion shall not be considered unless proper notice has been given after the original or substantive motion has been seconded and notice of such amendment, shall, if required by the Chairman, be reduced to writing and handed to the Chairman. Amendments shall be taken in the order that they are received.
- 7.5 A Councillor may move amendments to his own motion. If the motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder.
- 7.6 Any amendment to a motion shall be either:
 - a. to leave out words;
 - b. to add words;
 - c. to leave out words and add other words.
- 7.7 A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration.
- 7.8 Only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time. No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.
- 7.9 Subject to Standing Order 7.8 above, one or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.
- 7.10 Pursuant to standing order 7.8 above, the number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a councillor, is limited to one.
- 7.11 If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order in which they were received.
- 7.12 If an amendment is carried, the original motion, as amended, shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- 7.13 The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply.
- 7.14 Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply in respect of the substantive motion at the very end of debate and immediately before it is put to the vote.
- 7.15 Subject to standing order 7.13 and 7.14 above, a councillor may not speak further in respect of any one motion except to speak once an amendment moved by another councillor or to make a point of order or to give a personal explanation, save where the Chairman may at his discretion and after all other councillors have had the opportunity to speak allow further debate on the motion.
- 7.16 During the debate of a motion, a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation. A councillor raising a point of order shall be heard forthwith and shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting he is concerned by.
- 7.17 Points of order shall be on procedural matters only. The Chairman shall decide if they are heard and his decision shall be final.

- 7.18 With the consent of the seconder and/or of the meeting, a motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer. A councillor shall not speak upon the said motion or amendment unless permission for the withdrawal of the motion or amendment has been refused.
- 7.19 Subject to standing order 7.15 above, when a councillor's motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except:
- a. to amend the motion;
 - b. to proceed to the next business;
 - c. to adjourn the debate;
 - d. to put the motion to a vote;
 - e. to ask a person to be silent or for him to leave the meeting;
 - f. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - g. to exclude the public and press;
 - h. to adjourn the meeting;
 - i. to suspend any standing order, except those which are mandatory.
- 7.20 In respect of standing order 7.19 above, the Chairman shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote. The Chairman shall call upon the mover of the motion under debate to exercise or waive his right of reply and shall put the motion to the vote after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the meeting shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.
- 7.21 Councillors shall at all times:
- a. Wait to be recognised by the Chairman before speaking,
 - b. Address the Chairman

8 Code of conduct

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

- 8.1 Unless having 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 they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- 8.2 Unless having 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 he has a personal interest if so required by the council's code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- 8.3 All Councillors shall undertake training in The Code of Conduct within 6 months or as soon as practically possible thereafter following delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.
- 8.4 **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.
- 8.5 A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.

- 8.6 A dispensation request shall confirm:
- a. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - b. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - c. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - d. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.

8.7 A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 8.5 above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:

- a. **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**
- b. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area or**
- c. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

9. Code of Conduct Complaints

- 9.1 Upon notification by the District 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 report this to the council.
- 9.2 Where the notification in standing order 9.1 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 9.4 below.
- 9.3 The council may:
- a. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
 - b. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- 9.4 Upon notification by the District 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. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

10. Minutes

- 10.1 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, and not read out loud at the meeting.
- 10.2 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 be raised in accordance with standing order 6.1 d above.
- 10.3 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.

10.4 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 (*committee name*) held on (*date*) in respect of (*issue*) were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the majority of the councillors present and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”

10.5 Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, any previous draft minutes, notes or recordings of the meeting shall be destroyed.

11. Disorderly conduct

11.1 No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly or in such a manner to bring the Council into disrepute.

11.2 If, in the opinion of the Chairman, there has been a breach of standing order 11.1 above, the Chairman shall express that opinion and thereafter any councillor (including the Chairman) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.

11.3 If a resolution made in accordance with standing order 11.2 above, is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or he may adjourn the meeting.

12. Rescission of previous resolutions

12.1 A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least six councillors or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.

12.2 When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to standing order 12.1 above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

13. Voting on appointments

13.1 Where more than 2 persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of 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. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

14. Expenditure

14.1 Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.

14.2 The Council's financial regulations shall be reviewed annually.

14.3 The Council's financial regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee, sub-committee or to an employee.

15. Execution and sealing of legal deeds

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

15.2 In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 16.1 above, legal deeds shall be signed by the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the Council, and witnessed by the Proper Officer.

16. Committees

16.1 The Council may, at its annual meeting, appoint the following standing committees:

- Planning Committee
- Personnel Committee
- Finance Committee

It shall also:

- a. determine their terms of reference; and
- b. appoint councillor or non-councillor members to each committee (unless the appointment of non-councillors is prohibited by law) so as to hold office until the next annual meeting.

16.2 The Council may appoint other committees or working groups at the annual meeting or at any other time as may be necessary. The Council may dissolve a committee or working group at any time.

16.3 At the first committee meeting each year the committee shall appoint a Chairman and Vice Chairman.

16.4 Committees shall determine the dates of their meetings and ideally this should be done at the first meeting of the committee each year.

16.5 If a councillor of a committee has confirmed to the Proper Officer prior to the start of a committee meeting that they will be unable to attend then a councillor not on the committee may substitute for them at that meeting. The Proper officer must receive in writing (email is acceptable) from the committee member prior to the start of the meeting as to who this substitute will be.

16.6 The conduct of committee meetings shall be as for ordinary Council meetings, except as provided for above.

17. Sub-committees

17.1 Unless there is a Council resolution to the contrary, every committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by resolution of

the committee.

18. Extraordinary meetings

- 18.1 The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- 18.2 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 to do so by four councillors, those four councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the four councillors.**
- 18.3 The Chairman of a committee (or a sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee at any time.
- 18.4 If the Chairman of a committee (or a sub-committee) does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested by to do so by two councillors who are members of that committee (or sub-committee), those two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee (or a sub-committee).
- 18.5 The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.

19. Advisory committees (Working Groups)

- 19.1 The Council may appoint advisory committees/working groups comprised of a number of councillors and non-councillors.
- 19.2 Advisory Committees/working groups may consist wholly of persons who are non-councillors.

20. Accounts and financial statement

- 20.1 "Proper practices" in Standing Orders refer to the most recent version of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners Guide (England)
- 20.2 All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Council's financial regulations, which shall be reviewed at least annually.
- 20.3 The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to the Council as soon as practicable after 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments for the each quarter and the balances held at the end of a quarter. This statement should include a comparison with the budget for the financial year.
- 20.4 A Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March shall be presented to the Finance Committee before the end of the following month of May. The Statement of Accounts of the Council (which is subject to external audit), including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to Council for formal approval before 30

June.

21. Estimates/precepts

- 21.1 The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at the January council meeting.
- 21.2 Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Proper Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than the planned December Council meeting.

22. Canvassing of and recommendations by councillors

- 22.1 Canvassing councillors or the members of a committee or sub-committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from such an appointment. The Proper Officer shall disclose the requirements of this standing order to every candidate.
- 22.2 A councillor or a member of a committee or sub-committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council nor recommend a person for such appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such person may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.
- 22.3 Standing order 23 shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

23. Inspection of documents

- 23.1 Subject to standing orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a councillor may, for the purpose of his official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee or a sub-committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its committees or sub-committees shall be available for inspection by councillors.

24. Unauthorised activities

- 24.1 Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee:
 - a. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - b. issue orders, instructions or directions.

25. Confidential business

- 25.1 Councillors shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware is of a confidential nature.
- 25.2 A councillor in breach of the provisions of standing order 25.1 above may be censured and/or reported under the Council's code of conduct and/or removed from a committee or a sub-committee by a resolution of the Council.

26. Relations with the press/media

- 26.1 All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.
- 26.2 In accordance with the Council's policy in respect to dealing with the press and/or other media, councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media, unless authorised to do so by the Council or the Proper Officer.

27. Freedom of Information Act 2000

- 27.1 All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 27.2 Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman of the Council. The Council may set up a committee to deal with any correspondence/notices from the Information Commissioner and the committee shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 including exercising the powers of the Proper Officer in respect of Freedom of Information requests set out under standing order 4.3 j. above.

28. Liaison with District and County Councillors

- 28.1 An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillors of the District and County representing all or part of the Parish of Woodhall Spa.
- 28.2 County and District Councillors will have the right to speak during meetings subject to the Chairman's permission.

29. Application, variation, suspension and revocation of standing orders

- 29.1 Any or every part of the standing orders, except those which are mandatory by law (ie those highlighted in bold in this document), may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.
- 29.2 A motion to permanently add to or to vary or to revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders not mandatory by law shall be circulated with the notice of the meeting at which it is to be moved.
- 29.3 The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.
- 29.4 A councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than 3 times in one meeting may result in him being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.
- 29.5 Standing orders shall be reviewed annually.

30. Matters affecting council employees

- 30.1 If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the Council has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to standing order 1.6 above.
- 30.2 The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman shall annually conduct a review of the performance and/or appraisal of the Proper Officer and shall keep a written record of it. The review and/or appraisal shall be reported back and shall be subject to approval by resolution by the Council.
- 30.3 The Proper Officer shall be the line manager for all employees of the Council.
- 30.4 The Council shall keep written records of all meetings relating to employee(s) performance, and capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.
- 30.5 The Council shall keep written records relating to employees secure.
- 30.6 Records documenting reasons for an employee's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for the same.

31. Standing orders to be given to councillors

- 31.1 The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor upon delivery of his declaration of acceptance of office.