

HEATON-WITH-OXCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

Conduct of Meetings

Ordinary Parish Council Meetings

1. Ordinary meetings will be held each month throughout the year except for August. Meetings will be held on the third Thursday of each month commencing at 7:00pm. Any variance to this will be as directed by the Council.
2. 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.
3. When calculating the three 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, or a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning shall not count.
4. 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.
5. Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. The period of time designated for public participation shall be at the Chairperson's discretion.
6. Each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 10 minutes, or as extended at the Chairperson's discretion.
7. A question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate.
8. A record of a public participation at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
9. A person shall raise his/her hand when requesting to speak and shall address his/her comments to the Chairperson.
10. Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chairperson shall direct the order of speaking.
11. Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is not permitted without the Council's prior consent.
12. The press shall be provided reasonable facilities for the reporting of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.
13. Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairperson may in his/her absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairperson.

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14. The Chairperson, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairperson is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairperson if present, shall preside. If both the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.
15. All questions/decisions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.
16. The Chairperson may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise a casting vote whether or not he/she gave an original vote.
17. Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on any 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/her vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
18. The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of Councillors present and absent.
19. If prior to a meeting, a Councillor has submitted reasons for his/her absence at the meeting which is then approved by a resolution, such resolution shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the approval was given.
20. The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to Councillors in respect of the entire meeting.
21. 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.
22. 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.
23. 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.
24. Meetings shall not exceed a period of 3 hours.

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

25. 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.
26. 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.
27. If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 7:00pm.
28. The election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.

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29. The Chairperson of the Council, unless he/she 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.
30. The Vice-Chairperson of the Council unless he/she resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairperson of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.
31. In an election year, if the current Chairperson of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he/she shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chairperson of the Council has been elected. The current Chairperson of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairperson of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
32. In an election year, if the current Chairperson of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he/she shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairperson of the Council has been elected. He/she may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairperson of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
33. Following the election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows.
 - In an election year, delivery by Councillors of their declarations of acceptance of office;
 - Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
 - Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
 - Review of arrangements, including any charters, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities;
 - Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
 - In a year of elections, if a Council's period of eligibility to exercise the power of wellbeing has expired to review and make arrangements to reaffirm eligibility;
 - Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment;
 - Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks;
 - Review of the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies;
 - Establishing or reviewing the Council's complaints procedure;
 - Establishing or reviewing the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998;
 - Establishing or reviewing the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
 - Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council for the year ahead.

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Extraordinary meetings

34. The Chairperson of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.
35. If the Chairperson 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 two Councillors, those two 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 two Councillors.
36. The Chairperson of a committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee at any time.

Motions

Motions requiring written notice

37. No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda, or the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Council's Proper Officer at least **three clear days** before the next meeting.
38. The Proper Officer may, before including a motion in the agenda correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
39. If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer in clear and certain language at least **three clear days** before the meeting.
40. If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chairperson 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 or rejected in the agenda.
41. Having consulted the Chairperson or Councillors the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
42. Notice of every motion received in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be numbered in the order received and shall be open to inspection by all Councillors.
43. Every motion rejected in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be duly recorded with a note by the Proper Officer giving reasons for its rejection which shall be open to inspection by all Councillors.
44. 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.

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Motions not requiring written notice

45. Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice.
- To appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
 - To approve the absences of Councillors;
 - To approve the accuracy of the Minutes of the previous meeting;
 - To correct an inaccuracy in the Minutes of the previous meeting;
 - To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting;
 - To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience;
 - To proceed to the next business on the agenda;
 - To close or adjourn debate;
 - To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee;
 - To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any Councillors thereto;
 - To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee;
 - To dissolve a committee or sub-committee;
 - To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee;
 - To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub-committee or an employee;
 - To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant;
 - To authorise legal deeds to be signed by two Councillors and witnessed;
 - To authorise the payment of monies in accordance with Financial Regulations;
 - To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it;
 - To extend the time limit for speeches;
 - To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting;
 - To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct;
 - To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders;
 - To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law;
 - To adjourn the meeting;
 - To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies;
 - To answer questions from Councillors.

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46. Business of the Council will normally be undertaken in meetings summoned in accordance with Standing Orders. Routine business matters and the implementation of Council decisions may be the subject of email communications between Chairperson, Councillors and Proper Officer as necessary. However, decisions of Council should not be made through email communication but normally at Council meetings.
47. In exceptional circumstances, a decision can be made by 'Chairperson's action' provided that a full explanation of the reason(s) for the decision being made and any outcomes are reported to Members as soon practicable and placed on the agenda of the next Council meeting.

Rules of debate

48. Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chairperson's direction for reasons of expedience.
49. A motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded;
50. A motion included in an agenda not moved by the Councillor who tabled it, may be treated as withdrawn.
51. A motion to amend an original or substantive motion shall not be considered unless proper notice has been given and notice of such amendment, shall, if required by the Chairperson, be given in writing and handed to the Chairperson who shall determine the order in which they are considered.
52. A Councillor may move amendments to his/her own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder.
53. Any amendment to a motion shall be either:
- to leave out words;
 - to add words;
 - to leave out words and add other words.
54. A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration.
55. Only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chairperson. No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.
56. One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairperson considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.
57. The number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a Councillor, is limited to one.
58. If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairperson.
59. 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.

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60. The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 10 minutes.
61. 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.
62. A Councillor may not speak further in respect of any one motion except to speak once on an amendment moved by another Councillor or to make a point of order or to give a personal explanation.
63. 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.
64. A Councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he considers has been breached or specify the irregularity he/she is concerned by in the meeting.
65. A point of order shall be decided by the Chairperson and his/her decision shall be final.
66. 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.
67. When a Councillor's motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except to:
 - amend the motion;
 - proceed to the next business;
 - adjourn the debate;
 - put the motion to a vote;
 - ask a person to be silent or else to leave the meeting;
 - refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - exclude the public and press;
 - adjourn the meeting;
 - suspend any standing order, except those which are mandatory.
68. The Chairperson shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote. The Chairperson shall call upon the mover of the motion under debate to exercise or waive his/her 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.

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Questions

69. A Councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council provided **three clear days' notice** of the question has been given to the Proper Officer.
70. Questions not related to items of business on the agenda for a meeting shall only be asked during the part of the meeting set aside for such questions. Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

Minutes

71. 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 having been read.
72. 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 these standing order (See *Motions* above)
73. Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chairperson of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the Minutes relate.
74. Upon a resolution, which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, any previous draft minutes or recordings of the meeting shall be destroyed.

Reverse of previous resolutions

75. A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within **six months** with the written notice of at least **three Councillors** of the Council, or by special motion or recommendation of a committee.
76. When a special motion or any other motion has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further **six months**.

Voting on appointments

77. Where more than **two 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 Chairperson's casting vote.

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Committees

78. The Council may, at its annual meeting, appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as may be necessary, and:
- shall determine their terms of reference;
 - may permit committees to determine the dates of their meetings;
 - 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);
 - may appoint substitute Councillors to a committee whose role is to replace ordinary Councillors at a meeting of a committee if ordinary Councillors of the committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer **three days** before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
 - an ordinary member of a committee who has been replaced at a meeting by a substitute member shall not be permitted to participate in debate or vote on business at that meeting and may only speak during any public participation session during the meeting;
 - may in accordance with standing orders, dissolve a committee at any time.

Advisory committees

79. The Council may appoint advisory committees comprised of a number of Councillors and non-Councillors.
80. Advisory committees and any sub-committees may consist wholly of persons who are non-Councillors.

Canvassing of and recommendations by Councillors

81. Canvassing Councillors or the members of a committee directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from such an appointment.
82. A Councillor or a member of a committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council or recommend a person for such appointment or for promotion but may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience, or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.

Inspection of documents

83. Subject to standing orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a Councillor may, for the purpose of his/her 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 or its committees shall be available for inspection by Councillors.

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Unauthorised activities

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

Confidential business

85. Councillors shall not disclose confidential council business or confidential information given to them in their capacity as Councillors.
86. A Councillor in breach of the provisions of standing order 83 above may be removed from a committee by a resolution of the Council.

Code of conduct

87. All Councillors shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council being the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007.
88. Pursuant to relevant provisions in the statutory code of conduct in force at the time, Councillors may **only** exercise the rights contained in standing order 87 below only if members of the public are permitted to:
- make representations;
 - answer questions;
 - give evidence relating to the business being transacted.
89. Councillors with a prejudicial interest in relation to any item of business being transacted at a meeting may:
- make representations;
 - answer questions;
 - give evidence relating to the business being transacted but must, thereafter, leave the room.

Disorderly conduct

90. No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly.
91. If, in the opinion of the Chairperson, there has been a breach of standing order 88 above, the Chairperson shall express that opinion and thereafter any Councillor (including the Chairperson) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be implemented directly and without further discussion.
92. If a resolution made in accordance with standing order 89 above, is disobeyed, the Chairperson may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or may adjourn the meeting.

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Allegations of breaches of the code of conduct

93. On receipt of a notification that there has been an alleged breach of the code of conduct the Proper Officer shall refer it the Council.
94. Where the notification relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairperson of that fact, who, upon receipt of such notification, shall nominate a person to assume the duties of the Proper Officer until the complaint is resolved.
95. The subject matter of notifications shall be confidential and, insofar as it is possible to do so by law, the Council (including the Proper Officer and the Chairperson) shall take the steps set out below, together with other steps considered necessary, to maintain confidentiality:
- Draft the summonses and agendas in such a way that the identity and subject matter of the complaint are not disclosed.;
 - Ensure that any background papers containing information in relation to the complaint are not made public;
 - Ensure that the public and press are excluded from meetings as appropriate;
 - Ensure that the Minutes of meetings preserve confidentiality;
 - Consider any liaison that may be required with the person or body with statutory responsibility for the investigation of the matter.
96. These standing orders will not prohibit the Council (whether through the Proper Officer or the Chairperson) from disclosing information to members and officers of the Council or to other persons where such disclosure is necessary to deal with the complaint or is required by law.
97. The Council shall have the power to:
- seek documentary and other evidence from the person with responsibility for investigation of the matter;
 - seek and share information relevant to the complaint;
 - grant the Member involved a financial indemnity in respect of legal costs, which shall be in accordance with the law and subject to approval by a meeting of the Council.
98. References to a notification shall be taken to refer to a communication of any kind which relates to a breach or an alleged breach of the code of conduct by a Councillor.
99. Before exercising the power to promote wellbeing, a meeting of the full Council shall have passed a resolution to confirm it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria required to qualify as an eligible parish council.
100. The Council's period of eligibility begins on the date that the resolution was made and expires on the day before the annual meeting of the Council.

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Power of wellbeing (England)

101. After the expiry of its preceding period of eligibility, the Council continues to be an eligible council solely for the purpose of completing any activity undertaken in the exercise of the power to promote wellbeing which was not completed before the expiry of the Council's period of eligibility.

Matters affecting council employees

102. 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.
103. Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairperson, or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairperson, of any absence occasioned by illness or urgency and that person shall report such absence to next meeting of the Council.
104. The Chairperson or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairperson shall conduct a review of the performance and/or appraisal of the Proper Officer and shall keep a written record of it.
105. The review and/or appraisal shall be reported back and shall be subject to approval by resolution by the Council.
106. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Proper Officer shall contact the Chairperson or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairperson in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.
107. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance and disciplinary matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Proper Officer relates to the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson 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.
108. The Chairperson shall be responsible for the management of the Proper Officer and shall keep written records of all meetings relating to their performance, and capabilities, grievance, and disciplinary matters.
109. Records documenting reasons for the Proper Officer's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to members of the Council at the Chairperson's discretion.
110. Only the Chairperson shall have access to employee records referred to these standing orders.
111. Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment shall be provided only to the Proper Officer and/or the Chairperson of the Council.

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Relations with the press/media

112. 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.
113. 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.

Liaison with City and County Councillors and Members of Parliament

114. Unless the Council otherwise orders an open invitation to attend any of the Council's meetings will be sent annually to the City and County Councillor's representing its ward and to the Member of Parliament for Morecambe and Lunesdale.
115. As directed by the Council, an invitation to attend a specific meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the Councillor of the City and/or County Council representing its electoral ward.

Proper Officer

116. The Council's Proper Officer shall be either the Proper Officer or such other employee appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence. 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.
117. The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following.
 - Sign and serve on Councillors by delivery or post at their residences a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council at least **three clear days** before the meeting;
 - Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least **three clear days** before a meeting of the Council (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by Councillors is signed by them);
 - Include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a Councillor has given written notice at least **three days before** the meeting confirming his/her withdrawal of it;
 - Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairperson of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his/her office;

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- Make available for inspection the Minutes of meetings;
- Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;
- Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors;
- Retain a copy of every Councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection;
- Keep proper records required before and after meetings;
- 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;
- Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- Manage the organisation, storage of and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form;
- Arrange for legal deeds to be **signed by two Councillors and witnessed**
- 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.
- Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in the Minutes of the meeting;
- Refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chairperson or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairperson 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;
- Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders.

Expenditure

118. Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
119. The Council's Financial Regulations shall be reviewed once a year.
120. 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.

Accounts and Financial Statement

121. 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.
122. The RFO shall supply to 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 each quarter and the balances held at the end of the quarter. This statement should include a comparison with the budget for the financial year.

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123. A Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis for a year to 31 March shall be presented to Council before the end of May each year. 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.

Estimates / Precepts

124. The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of February.
125. 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 end of January.

Financial matters

126. The Council shall consider and approve Financial Regulations drawn up by the Proper Officer which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
- the accounting records and systems of internal control;
 - the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - the work of the Internal Auditor and the receipt of regular reports from the Internal Auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - the inspection and copying by Councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments;
 - procurement policies including the setting of values for different procedures where the contract has an estimated value of less than £20,000.
127. Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £20,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender.
128. Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:
- a public notice of intention to place a contract to be placed in a local newspaper;
 - a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works;
 - tenders sent in a sealed marked envelope to the Proper Officer by a stated date and time;
 - tenders submitted opened after the stated closing date and time by the Proper Officer and at least one member of the Council;
 - tenders assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of Council or Committee.
129. Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.

HEATON-WITH-OXCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

130. Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed EU Regulations thresholds the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2006 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with EU procurement rules.

Execution and sealing of legal deeds

131. A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution.
132. Any two members of the Council, may sign on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures

Freedom of Information Act 2000

133. 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.
134. Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Council. The Council 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

Variation, revocation and suspension of standing orders

135. Any or every part of the standing orders, except those which are mandatory by law, may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.
136. 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 carried where two-thirds of the Councillors at a meeting of the Council vote in favour.

Standing orders to be given to Councillors

137. The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a Councillor upon delivery of his/her declaration of acceptance of office.
138. The Chairperson's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.
139. A Councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than three times in one meeting may result in him /her being excluded from the meeting.