

BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

1 MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

- 1.1 Meetings of the Council shall be held as follows:
 - 1.1.1 Annual Statutory meeting;
 - 1.1.2 Full Council meeting every seven weeks;
 - 1.1.3 Interim Council Meetings every seven weeks between Full Council meetings for progress of urgent business and any Standing Committee recommendations.
- 1.2 There will be a public session, normally lasting 15 minutes, held prior to all Council meetings except for the Annual Statutory meeting.
- 1.3 All Full Council and Standing Committee meetings shall not exceed three hours in duration unless a majority of those present and sufficient to maintain a quorum plus the Clerk, unless a Member agrees to take notes, agree to continue transacting business for another hour. Where this is agreed, the matter shall be reviewed hourly thereafter. If the meeting does not continue, it shall stand adjourned to a subsequent meeting date agreed at the meeting.
- 1.4 All issues considered by the Council or its Standing Committees shall be relevant to some matter for which the Council has powers or duties or which affect the area of the Town Council, and then only if that matter is included on the Agenda. Other items, including items raised by the Chairman, shall be noted and discussion shall only be enabled when they are detailed on a subsequent Agenda.

2 ATTENDANCE

- 2.1 Any Member failing throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of their last attendance to attend any meeting of the Council shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the Council before the expiry of the period, cease to be a member of the Council.
- 2.2 Members of Standing Committees are required to attend meetings of those Standing Committees in accordance with the requirements of Standing Order 2.1, failing which will result in that Member ceasing to be a member of that Standing Committee, and therefore in breach of Standing Order 2.1.

3 CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING

- 3.1 Any power or duty of the Town Mayor in relation to the conduct of a meeting may be exercised by the person presiding at the meeting.
- 3.2 The person presiding at the meeting shall be addressed in their preferred manner.

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4 QUORUM

- 4.1 Business shall not be transacted at a meeting unless at least one third of the whole membership is present.
- 4.2 If during any meeting of the Council the Town Mayor, after counting the number of Members present, declares that there is not a quorum, the meeting shall stand adjourned.
- 4.3 The consideration of any business not transacted shall be adjourned to a time fixed by the Town Mayor at the time the meeting is adjourned, or to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

5 NOTICE OF MEETINGS

- 5.1 Meetings shall be called by the Clerk according to the schedule agreed by the Town Council. Variation to the time and date of any meeting shall be agreed at the preceding meeting. Notice of meetings shall be sent to Members giving three clear working days notice excluding the day of the meeting.
- 5.2 Any member of the Council may request the relevant Chairman to include an item, subject to Standing Order 8.5, on the Agenda of the Full Council or one of its Standing Committees.

6 ORDER OF BUSINESS

- 6.1 The order of business at meetings of the Full Council, unless a change is agreed at the meeting, shall be:
 - 6.1.1 To appoint a Chairman if the Town Mayor is absent;
 - 6.1.2 To deal with any business expressly required by statute;
 - 6.1.3 To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the last meeting of the Full Council;
 - 6.1.4 Items contained in the preceding Minutes previously notified to the Town Clerk;
 - 6.1.5 Town Clerk's announcements;
 - 6.1.6 To dispose of any business remaining from the preceding meeting;
 - 6.1.7 To authorise the sealing of documents;
 - 6.1.8 To receive Standing Committee reports and Minutes and consider recommendations;
 - 6.1.9 To deal with questions under Standing Order 9;
 - 6.1.10 To consider Motions in the order that they appear on the Agenda;

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6.1.11 Other business, if any, specified on the Agenda;

6.1.12 Any urgent matters which the Town Mayor may wish to bring to the attention of the Council.

7 VARIATION OF ORDER OF BUSINESS

7.1 The order of business may be varied excepting Standing Orders 6.1.1, 6.1.2 and 6.1.3 unless a resolution is passed on a motion (which need not be in writing) duly moved and seconded shall be put without discussion.

8 MOTIONS

8.1 **Notices of Motion** – Notice of every motion, other than a motion under Standing Order 7.1 which may be moved without notice, shall be given in writing, signed by the Member or Members of the Council giving the notice, and delivered to the office of the Town Clerk not less than five working days, excluding the day of the meeting, before the next meeting of the Full Council. Such motions shall be issued with the Agenda and retained at the office of the Town Clerk for inspection by any member.

8.2 **Motions to be sent out in Summons** – the Town Clerk shall set out in the Agenda for every meeting of the Full Council all motions of which notice has been duly given and in the order in which they have been received, unless the Member giving such notice in writing, when giving it, advises the intention to move it at some later meeting, or has since withdrawn it in writing.

8.3 **Referral of Motions** – if the subject matter of any resolution comes within the province of a Standing Committee it shall, upon being moved and seconded, stand referred to that Standing Committee.

8.4 **Motion not moved** – if any motion set out in the Agenda of the meeting is not moved, either by the person who gave notice for it or by some other Member on the mover's behalf it shall, unless postponed by consent of the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

8.5 **Scope of Motions** – all motions shall be relevant to some matter within the Council's statutory remit or which affects the legitimate interests of the Town Council.

8.6 **Right of Reply** – the mover of a motion shall have a right of reply immediately before the motion is put to the vote. If an amendment is proposed the mover of the amendment shall be entitled to reply immediately before the amendment is put to the vote. A Member exercising the right of reply shall not introduce new matters. After the right of reply has been exercised or waived, a vote shall be taken without further discussion.

8.7 **Discussion of Motion & Amendments** – Any motion discussed under clause 8.1 or any proposed amendment to such motion shall be moved but not discussed or a vote taken unless a seconder has been named after the motion has been put.

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9 MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS WHICH MAY BE MOVED WITHOUT NOTICE

- 9.1 The following motions and amendments may be moved without notice:
 - 9.1.1 appointment of a Chairman for the meeting;
 - 9.1.2 querying the accuracy of the previous Minutes;
 - 9.1.3 that an item of business specified in the Agenda has precedence;
 - 9.1.4 referring the matter under discussion to a Standing Committee;
 - 9.1.5 the appointment of a committee and/or the members thereof, occasioned by an item mentioned in the Agenda for the meeting;
 - 9.1.6 the adoption of Standing Committee and/or Officer reports and any consequent resolutions;
 - 9.1.7 that leave is given to withdraw a motion;
 - 9.1.8 amendments to motions;
 - 9.1.9 that the meeting proceed to next business;
 - 9.1.10 that the question now be put;
 - 9.1.11 that the debate now be adjourned;
 - 9.1.12 that the meeting now be adjourned;
 - 9.1.13 that documents now be sealed;
 - 9.1.14 that Standing Orders now be suspended;
 - 9.1.15 that Standing Orders now be resumed;
 - 9.1.16 that members of the public now be excluded in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960;
 - 9.1.17 that a Member named under Standing Order 25.1.2 not be further heard or does leave the meeting;
 - 9.1.18 giving the consent of the Council where the consent of the Council is required by these Standing Orders.

10 QUESTIONS

- 10.1 A Member of the Council may:
 - 10.1.1 Ask the Chairman any question upon an item in a Standing Committee Minute when that item is under consideration.

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- 10.1.2 Providing five clear working days notice in writing has been given to the Town Clerk, ask the Town Mayor or the Chairman of any Standing Committee any question on any matter relating to the Council's powers or duties, or affecting the remit of the Town Council.
- 10.1.3 With the permission of the Town Mayor, put to him or the Chairman of any Standing Committee any question relating to urgent business providing that such notice shall be delivered to the office of the Town Clerk by no later than 11.00 am on the day of the meeting.

11 MINUTES

- 11.1) The Town Mayor shall put the question that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the day of be approved as a correct record.

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

- 11.2) At the Council meeting the Chairman of the Standing Committee shall present the minutes to the Members of that Committee present; upon their approval the minutes will be presented to the Council for ratification.

12 RESCISSION OF PRECEDING RESOLUTION

- 12.1 No motion considered within the preceding six months may be revived, amended or rescinded unless the proposal to do so bears the names of at least six Members, or arises from a report or recommendation by a Standing Committee.
- 12.2 Any such motion defined by Standing Order 12.1 shall not then be open to further consideration within a further period of six months unless the proposal to do so bears the names of at least nine Members.

13 VOTING

- 13.1 **Recorded vote** - The method of voting at meetings of the Council shall be by show of hands; provided that at the request of any member of the Council made before the vote is taken and supported by three other members who signify their support by rising in their places, the voting on any question shall be by roll-call and shall be recorded so as to show how each member present voted. The name of any member present and not voting shall also be recorded.
- 13.2 **Casting vote** – in the case of an equality of votes the Chairman shall have a second and casting vote.

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- 13.3 **Voting on Appointments** – where more than two persons are nominated for any position to be filled by the Council, and the votes cast do not indicate a clear majority in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be deleted and a fresh vote shall be taken on the remainder, this being repeated until a majority of votes are cast in favour of one person. If more than one person has equally the least number of votes then the Chairman shall use a second and casting vote to determine the selection.

14 RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

- 14.1 Every member of the Council attending a meeting of the Council, or any Standing Committees of which they are a member, shall have their name recorded in the Minute book.

15 PARTICIPATION AFTER DECLARATION OF PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

- 15.1 Any Member declaring a prejudicial interest in any item to be considered by the Council or one of its Standing Committees may attend a meeting but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence related to that item; and then only provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.
- 15.2 Such Members must leave the meeting room once they have completed their contribution or when the meeting so decides, whichever is the sooner; and may not remain in the public gallery to observe any vote on the matter.

16 INTEREST OF MEMBERS IN CONTRACTS AND OTHER MATTERS

- 16.1 Any Member of the Council with any direct or indirect pecuniary interest in any contract, proposed contract, or other matter within the meaning of section 94 of the Local Government Act 1972, other than an indirect interest described in section 95 thereof, shall withdraw from the meeting while the contract, proposed contract or other matter is under consideration by the Council unless:
- 16.1.1 The disability to discuss the matter imposed upon them by the section 96 of the Local Government Act 1972 has been removed by the District Council under section 97 of that Act; or
- 16.1.2 The contract, proposed contract or other matter is under consideration by the Council as part of a report of a Standing Committee and is not in itself the subject of debate.
- 16.2 Members will be required to confirm the details in their register of interests on an annual basis and within 28 days of any major change.

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17 INTERESTS OF OFFICERS IN CONTRACTS

- 17.1 The Town Clerk shall record in a book kept for this purpose the particulars of any notice of pecuniary interest in a contract given by an Officer of the Council under section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972, and such book shall be available during office hours for inspection by any Member of the Council.

18 CONTRACT TENDER FINANCIAL LIMITS

- 18.1 For any contract to be awarded by the Council for works costing over £500.00 (five hundred pounds sterling) but under £5,000.00 (five thousand pounds sterling), a minimum of three quotations shall be obtained; and for contracts over £5,000.00 (five thousand pounds sterling) in value a minimum of three closed tender bids shall be obtained.

19 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

- 19.1 The Seal of the Council shall only be affixed to a document where the sealing of that document has been authorised by resolution of the Council or of a Standing Committee to which the Council has delegated its powers in this respect.
- 19.2 A resolution of the Council, or of a Standing Committee where that Standing Committee has that power, authorising the acceptance of a tender, 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 contract, or any other business shall be sufficient authority for the sealing of any document necessary to give effect to that resolution.
- 19.3 The Seal of the Council shall be attested by the following persons present at the sealing: the Town Mayor and any other Member of the Council, plus the Town Clerk.

20 APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE

- 20.1 The Council may at any time appoint such Standing and other Committees as it deems necessary in order to carry out the work of the Council.
- 20.2 No Standing or other Committee shall be empowered to spend money unless a specific resolution to that effect has previously been passed the Full Council. Decisions at Precept meetings shall be deemed specific resolutions in this respect.
- 20.3 Standing and other Committees may vire funds within their specific remits.

21 DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

- 21.1 The Town Mayor shall appoint a Deputy Town Mayor whose appointment shall be notified to the Council and recorded in the Minutes of the following Full Council meeting.

22 PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES AND CONFIDENTIALITY

22.1 All Agendas, reports and other documents, and all proceedings of Standing and other Committees shall be open to the public excepting those under Standing Order 9.1.16.

23 CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES

23.1 The following shall be Standing Committees of the Council:

23.1.1 Planning;

23.1.2 Environment & Property;

23.1.3 Finance & Administration;

23.1.4 Events.

23.2 Standing and other Committees may only operate within their Terms of Reference.

23.3 The Town Mayor shall be an ex-officio member with full voting rights of all Standing Committees.

23.4 No members shall serve on less than two Standing Committees.

23.5 Standing Committees shall be appointed at the first Full Council meeting after the Annual Statutory meeting and shall sit for one year. Each Standing Committee shall elect its own Chairman and Vice Chairman. No Member may be Chairman of more than one Standing Committee.

23.6 By prior agreement with the Full Council, membership of any Standing Committee except Planning may be augmented by co-opting Buckingham residents, such co-optees being invited to participate in pre-defined topics but having no voting rights.

23.7 The number of co-optees per Standing Committee shall not exceed two.

23.8 Visitors may be formally requested to attend meetings. In exceptional circumstances the Town Mayor or Standing Committee Chairman may invite a visitor, in which case this shall be noted on the meeting Agenda.

23.9 During any meeting, invited visitors not detailed on the meeting Agenda may only be heard with the consent of the majority of Members present.

24 STANDING ORDERS TO APPLY TO COMMITTEES

24.1 Subject to the adjudication of the Chairman these Standing Orders shall apply to Standing Committee meetings, the quorum of which shall be one-third of the Standing Committee membership or three members, whichever is the greater.

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25 CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

- 25.1 Councillors shall refrain from profanities and smoking at all meetings.
- 25.2 At Full Council meetings, all Councillors shall rise to speak unless physically unable to do so.
- 25.3 If at any meeting any Member of the Council or its Standing Committees, in the opinion of the Chairman of that meeting, persistently disregards the ruling of the Chairman or behaves irregularly, improperly or offensively, or wilfully obstructs the business of the meeting, the Chairman or any other Member may move "That the Member named no longer be heard" and the motion if seconded shall be put and the determined without discussion.
- 25.4 If the Member so named continues to misbehave after a motion under Standing Order 25.3 has been carried, the Chairman shall either:
- 25.4.1 move "That the Member named shall leave the meeting", in which case the motion shall be put and determined without seconding or discussion; or
- 25.4.2 adjourn the meeting for such period as the Chairman at his discretion shall deem appropriate.

26 GENERAL DISTURBANCE

- 26.1 In the event of a general disturbance which, in the opinion of the meeting Chairman, renders the due and orderly conduct of business impossible, the Chairman in addition to any other vested power may, without a question being put, adjourn the meeting for such period as the Chairman at his discretion deem appropriate.

27 DISTURBANCE BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

- 27.1 Any member of the public interrupting the proceedings of any Full Council or Standing Committee meeting shall be warned by the Chairman. If the interruption continues, the Chairman shall order that person from the meeting room. In the case of a general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chairman may order that section to be cleared.

28 VARIATION AND REVOCATION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 28.1 Any motion to add to, vary or revoke these Standing Orders shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next meeting of the Full Council.

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29 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 29.1 Subject to Standing Order 29.2, any of the preceding Standing Orders may be suspended at the meeting where its suspension is moved.
- 29.2 A motion to suspend Standing Orders shall only be moved without notice when at least half of those entitled to attend the Full Council or Standing Committee are present.

30 INTERPRETATION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 30.1 The Town Mayor or Chairman presiding at any Full Council or a Standing Committee meeting may rule on the meaning of these Standing Orders, and their decision shall be final.