

DRAYCOTT IN THE MOORS PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS 2020

Reviewed and Resolved on 11th May 2020 at a meeting of Draycott-in-the-Moors Parish Council

1) ORDINARY MEETINGS:

- a) Meetings of the Parish Council shall be held on the second Monday of each month in Draycott Church Hall, ST11 9AG.

***Covid-19 Amendment** – due to the Covid 19 pandemic all meetings will be held remotely until again allowed to meet in a public building face to face or until the rules are reviewed by the National Association of Local Councils.*

- b) Quorum - 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 3. If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be adjourned.
- c) The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent the Vice Chairman shall preside. If both are absent a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present shall preside.

Public and Press:

- d) Meetings shall be open to the public and press 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.
- e) A period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with Standing Order I d above shall be included on the agenda this will last a maximum of 15 minutes unless extended by the Chairman.
- f) In accordance with Standing Order I (d) above a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session shall not require a response or debate. However, the Chairman may direct that a response to a question be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to the Clerk for a written or oral response.
- g) Each member of the Public may only speak on one subject per meeting.
- h) Subject to standing order I (d) above, 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 at the Chairman's request.
- i) A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- j) In accordance with standing order I (d) 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.

Agenda and Voting:

- k) The Council may only make decisions on items clearly specified on the Agenda. If agreed by the Chairman, any urgent items, which are not on the Agenda may be discussed, but no decision may be made at that meeting.
- l) Emergency business - Should it not be appropriate to convene a special meeting of the Council then any emergency business will be handled by the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and one other Councillor. Actions will be reported promptly to the Council.
- m) Minuted decisions of the Council will not be revised, except where a special item is placed on the agenda bearing the names of two Councillors and is considered and approved by the whole Council.
- n) All questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present voting thereon.
- o) The Chairman may give an original vote on any matter, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.
- p) Voting on any question shall be by a show of hands. A Councillor may also request that the Clerk records that their vote is noted or how each Councillor has voted including abstentions.

***Covid 19 Amendment** - For remote meetings to allow voting to be cast via the Chairman asking each Councilor in turn verbally for their vote rather than a show of hands which may not be visible to all present, on screen due to limitations with some devices.*

Minutes:

- q) The Minutes of a meeting shall record the names of Councillors present and absent.
- r) Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chairman and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate.

2) ANNUAL MEETINGS:

- a) The Annual meeting of the Council shall be held at the May meeting.

***Covid 19 Amendment** - The Annual meeting of the Council will not be held in 2020 due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. The Council will uphold status quo with the Current Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Parish Representatives until May 2021 or until advised by the National Association of Local Councils.*

- b) 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.
- c) The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if any) shall be the first business completed at the Annual Meeting of the Council.
- d) The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned, shall continue in office and preside at

the Annual Meeting until his successor is elected.

- e) Following the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman the Councillors sign their Declarations of Acceptance of Office and are provided with a copy of the Council's Standing Orders.
- f) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are reviewed at this meeting and any changes made.

3) CODE OF CONDUCT

- a) The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to Councillors in respect of all meetings.
- b) Councillors with a prejudicial interest in relation to any item of business being transacted at a meeting may:
 - i) make representations,
 - ii) answer questions,
 - iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted;

but must, thereafter, leave the room.

- c) Councillors with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest will leave the room when the item in which they have an interest is discussed by the Council.

Covid - 19 Amendment – *A Councillor declaring a pecuniary interest will not 'leave the room' but must temporarily leave the remote meeting or remain mute. They can re-join and be given access back into the remote meeting room or un-mute by the Clerk when the next agenda item arises.*

- d) Councillors may apply for a dispensation in writing to the Clerk of the Council.
- e) The existence, duration and nature of any dispensations granted will be clearly minuted and included in the Register of Disclosable Interests.

4) EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS:

- a) The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.
- b) If the Chairman of the council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within 7 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.

5) ACCOUNTS & FINANCIAL MATIERS:

- a) All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- b) The Clerk of the Parish Council being the Councils Responsible Financial Officer will arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council.
- c) The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i) the accounting records and systems of internal control,
 - ii) the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council,
 - iii) the work of the internal auditor,
 - iv) the inspection and copying by Councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts,
 - v) procurement policies including the setting of values for different procedures.
- d) The Council is not bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.

6) INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS:

- a) Except 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 and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council shall be available for inspection by Councillors.

7) FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

- a) 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.

8) LIAISON WITH COUNTY & DISTRICT COUNCILLORS:

- a) An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the Councillor of the County Council representing its electoral ward

9) STANDING ORDERS:

- a) The Proper Officer (Clerk) shall provide a copy of the Council's Standing Orders to a Councillor after election.
- b) The Chairman's decision as to the application of Standing Orders at meetings shall be final.