



Standing Orders

Standing Orders

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Boddington Parish Council Standing Orders

1. Councillors

- 1.1. Following election or co-option to the Council, each Councillor will be issued with a copy of the Code of Conduct and Standing Orders of the Council. They will sign the form of Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of a Proper Officer of the Council, or of a Councillor who has been specifically designated by the Council for this purpose.
- 1.2. All Councillors will observe the Code of Conduct at all times when on Council business and no member will act in such a way that will bring the Council into disrepute, behave offensively in meetings or obstruct the Council's business.
- 1.3. The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council will define when a Councillor will declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Other Interests in an item for discussion at a Council meeting. The Councillor will declare that interest and the nature of the interest at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.4. A Councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's Code of Conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.
- 1.5. On receipt of a written application from a Councillor to a proper officer¹, the Council may make a dispensation to him or her to speak and (if agreed by the Council) to vote on a matter in which he or she has an interest. The Council will record in the minutes the details of the dispensation which is granted, for public inspection.
- 1.6. A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 1.5 above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:
 - i. 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
 - ii. granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the council's area or
 - iii. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.
- 1.7. Each Councillor is granted a dispensation to speak and vote on matters regarding:
 - i. Setting of the precept.
 - ii. Setting the Travel and Expenses policy and allowances
 - iii. Setting the Indemnity for Councillors under Council insurance arrangements;
- 1.8. Unless authorised by a resolution, no Councillor shall issue orders, instructions or directions.

2. Confidential or sensitive information

- 2.1. The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.

¹ Localism Act 2011 para.33(1)

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- 2.2. Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification nor shall they process such information for a purpose different from that for which was originally collected.

3. Annual Meetings

- 3.1. If the Annual Meeting is in an election year it must be held within 14 days after that election. If it is not an election year then the annual meeting will take place on an appropriate day in May as determined by the Parish Council.²
- 3.2. If the outgoing Chairman is available then he/she will preside until a new Chairman has been elected. The first business of the Annual Meeting will be the election of the Chairman (and Vice Chairman, if appropriate) and to receive their acceptance of office.
- 3.3. The retiring Chairman may report on the activities of the Council for the preceding year.
- 3.4. In addition to the business in 3.2 and 3.3 above, the business and requirements for an annual meeting will be subject to the same provisions as are specified for Council meetings in section 4, below.

4. Meetings

General

- 4.1. Meetings will be held in appropriate, accessible accommodation or other such place as permitted by regulation. Unless no other accommodation is available the meetings will not be held in premises used for the supply of alcohol.³
- 4.2. Meetings will 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 exclusion of the public and press from part or all of a meeting shall be by resolution which shall give reasons for the exclusion.
- 4.3. Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is permitted without the Council's consent, provided that this is carried out in accordance with government guidance (Department for Communities and Local Government, Open and accountable local government. A guide for the press and public on attending and reporting meetings of local government August 2014). Any recording must cease if the Council resolves to move into confidential session as per the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

Emergency Business

- 4.4. Should it not be appropriate to convene an additional ordinary meeting of the Council then any emergency business will be handled by a designated person usually the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman or Vice Chairman if the Chairman is not available. The scope of the delegated authority should be minuted and periodically reviewed. Actions will be reported promptly to the Council.

Extraordinary meetings

- 4.5. The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.

² LGA 1972 Sch 12pt II para 7.

³ LGA 1972 Sch12 pt II para 10(1)

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- 4.6. 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 in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.

Agenda

- 4.7. An agreed frequency of meetings will be decided at the Annual Meeting and Councillors will be advised of the meetings by the issue of a summons and agenda delivered by email, post or by hand. The agenda must be issued at least three Clear Days (as defined in para. 4.13) before the meeting. The requirement for issue of the summons and agenda also applies to additional ordinary meetings or extraordinary meeting should they be required.
- 4.8. An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda to the ward councillor of West Northamptonshire Unitary Council representing the area of the Parish Council.
- 4.9. Public notices will be posted in conspicuous places informing members of the public of the venue, time, date and business to be transacted at the meeting. The notice will be posted at least three Clear Days before the meeting.
- 4.10. The order of business on the agenda for the meeting will be agreed by the Clerk and Chairman (or Vice Chairman if the Chairman is not available). The agenda will always include an item to enable Councillors to declare interests.
- 4.11. A motion or proposal shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the council's area or its residents. Members must give written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least five Clear Days before the meeting. Motions or proposals received by the Proper Officer will be put on the next available agenda.
- 4.12. The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion. If the Proper Officer considers the wording of the motion is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least five Clear Days before the meeting. If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered 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. The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- 4.13. The days which are disregarded in calculating clear Days are the day of the notice, the day of the meeting, Sunday, bank holidays and any day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.

Rules of Debate

- 4.14. The Council may only take 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.

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Resolutions

- 4.15. Voting at the meeting shall be by a show of hands, voice vote, general consent, roll call unless, prior to the vote, a majority of Councillors request that the vote shall be by a signed ballot. Any Councillor or officer may seek clarification, other than in a signed ballot, on how each person has voted. Councillor voting will only be recorded in the minutes if a Councillor requests that their vote is noted. A Councillor, may also request, other than in the case of a signed ballot, that the Clerk records how each Councillor has voted including abstentions. Any request of this nature will be made before moving on to the next business.
- 4.16. In cases of equal votes the Chairman (or other person presiding) will have a second or casting vote.
- 4.17. Decisions of the Council will not be revised within 4 months, except where a special item is placed on the agenda bearing the name of two Councillors, and is considered and approved by the Council.

Conduct

- 4.18. An opportunity for members of the public to make representations, ask questions or give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend may be made available. The session shall not exceed 10 minutes with individual contribution of up to a maximum 3 minutes, unless directed otherwise by the Chairman.
- 4.19. Members of the public may only speak at Council meetings at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting.
- 4.20. A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- 4.21. Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- 4.22. The Chairman of the Council will preside at the meeting and will be responsible for the conduct of that meeting. If the Chairman is not present then the Vice Chairman will preside. If they are not present then the first matter on the agenda will be the election of an appropriate Councillor who will chair the meeting. Whoever chairs the meeting will assume the duties of the Chairman for the meeting.
- 4.23. The quorum for the Council will be one third of the total Councillor places but in any case not fewer than three (3) members. If there be insufficient members present then no business will be transacted and a fresh notice will be issued to reconvene the meeting at a later date.
- 4.24. If at any time during the holding of a remote meeting it ceases to be quorate as a result of technical difficulties e.g. a connection loss, discussion will be suspended and a period of 10 minutes allowed for reconnection to become quorate. If reconnection of a remote meeting is not established within 10 minutes or if at any other time during the meeting it ceases to be quorate then the meeting will be adjourned and any further business carried forward to the meeting when next convened.
- 4.25. A meeting shall not normally exceed a period of three hours. After a period of 2 hours and 30 minutes has elapsed any councillor can require the Chairman to adjourn the meeting after 3 hours and conclusion of the agenda item then under discussion.

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Disorderly conduct at meetings

- 4.26. No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- 4.27. If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- 4.28. If a resolution made under standing order 4.26 above is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

Minutes

- 4.29. A minute of the meeting will be kept by the Clerk or other nominated person in the Clerk's absence. The minutes will record any decisions made by the Council. Provisional draft minutes will be circulated to Councillors as soon as practicable, at the latest within two weeks after the meeting. Councillors may suggest amendments for the Clerk's consideration, after which the finalised draft minutes will be recirculated to Councillors and made available to the public.
- 4.30. The draft minutes will then be presented at the next meeting for approval. If the unapproved draft minutes have been circulated to councillors, they shall be taken as read. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes may be moved without written notice to the Proper Officer. If the inaccuracy in the minutes relates to a difficult or complicated item the meeting will be adjourned to enable the clerk to draw up a corrected minute. There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy.
- 4.31. The accuracy of the draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, 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.
- 4.32. If the Clerk and/or the chairman of the meeting does not consider the approved minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, the chairman shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph on the following terms or to the same effect:

"The Clerk and/or chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the [body] held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings"

Attendance

Apologies for absence

- 4.33. Members shall give as much advance notice as possible of absence from all meetings either by mentioning at a previous meeting, email or telephone to the Clerk. The deadline for receipt of an apology for absence shall be the end of office hours on the same day as the meeting unless for a Committee with a substitution arrangement – see Committee Substitutes below. Apologies for absence shall be made directly in advance wherever possible and not via a third person such as another Member at the meeting.

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Extended Periods of Absence

- 4.34. A Councillor who does not attend any meetings for a period of six consecutive months will automatically cease to be a Member of the Council unless the reason for absence is formally approved by the Council before the end of the period. If absence becomes necessary for extended intervals, Councillors are advised to submit a request to the Parish Clerk giving the reason for absence, for approval by the Council. A statutory excuse may include membership of the Armed Forces in time of war.

Committee Substitutes

- 4.35. To ensure that Committee Meetings are quorate, apologies for absence shall only be recorded if received 24 hours prior to the meeting (with reasons for absence) to allow for the next Committee substitute Councillor (as resolved at the Annual meeting) to be requested to attend by the Councillor who is unable to attend.

Recording and Publishing Attendance

- 4.36. For all meetings of the Council, the Clerk will record Members' attendance, or nonattendance with or without apologies, in a centrally held document kept for that purpose. The Minutes of these meetings will show Members in attendance and Members absent with and without apologies together with approval of absence if necessary.

5. Voting on appointments

(see also BPC Co-option Procedure for full and precise details of the co-option process)

- 5.1. 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. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

6. Finance & Insurance

- 6.1. 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:

6.1.1. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;

6.1.2. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;

6.1.3. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;

6.1.4. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and

6.1.5. whether contracts with an estimated value below £25,000 due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.

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6.2. The Council's financial affairs as regards:

- 6.2.1. Accounting and Audit
- 6.2.2. Banking Arrangements and Cheques
- 6.2.3. Contracts and Purchase Orders
- 6.2.4. Insurance
- 6.2.5. Reserves
- 6.2.6. Investments

shall be conducted in accordance with the Boddington Parish Council Financial Regulations.

7. Risk Assessment

(see also Boddington Parish Council Financial Regulations)

- 7.1. A risk assessment will be undertaken annually of all the activities of the Council and a report approved by the Council. This assessment will also cover the appropriateness of the internal audit arrangements. The Risk Assessment will be reviewed annually, and recorded in the minutes of the Council meeting.
- 7.2. If the Council undertakes a new activity not covered by the existing risk assessment an assessment will be undertaken before the activity commences.

8. Information and Media

- 8.1. In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.
- 8.2. The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.
- 8.3. The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. The Limitation Act 1980).
- 8.4. Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman of the Council or in his absence the Vice Chairman who shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 8.5.
- 8.6. Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

9. Proper Officers

- 9.1. The Clerk and the RFO hold statutory roles. Statutory duties must be fulfilled by a Proper Officer(s) which is usually the Clerk or the RFO, but may be another staff member nominated by the Council to undertake that duty.

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10. Clerk to the Council

- 10.1. The Council may appoint a number of employees to assist it in the performance of its duties. The Council shall appoint a Clerk to the Council which will be on an employed basis, unless the Clerk is a member of the Council, acting in an unpaid capacity.
- 10.2. The Clerk will be responsible for managing other employees of the Council.
- 10.3. As an employee of the Council the Clerk is covered by employment legislation dealing with employment rights, discrimination in employment, unfair dismissal, redundancy and similar matters. The Clerk will therefore have a contract of employment stating the terms and conditions under which he/she is employed. The Council must also have a Discipline and Grievance Procedure in place. The formal management of the clerk (eg appraisals, granting leave, recording sickness and absence etc.) is the responsibility of the personnel and recruitment sub-committee. On a day to day basis the clerk will work with the Chairman or designated Councillor acting with the authority of the Council on administrative matters.

11. Responsible Financial Officer

- 11.1. The Council shall appoint an appropriately qualified person on an unpaid basis to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) as set out in law and the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 11.2. The Clerk and the Responsible Financial Officer will undertake the work of each other when one is absent.

12. Committees and task and finish or working groups

- 12.1. The Council from time to time may set up committees and task-and-finish or working groups to undertake work on behalf of the Council. The Council will set their Terms of Reference, and they will report periodically to the Council. The Council may delegate certain powers to a Committee to make decisions. A task and finish or working group provides information, advice and/or makes recommendations to the Council (or a Committee) to decide and meetings may not be open to the public.
- 12.2. Committees and task-and-finish or working group members will observe and apply the Council's adopted Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, policies etc.

13. Planning Applications

- 13.1. Planning applications will normally be considered at the next scheduled meeting of the Council.
- 13.2. If the consultation deadline is prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Council, the Clerk should seek representations within 5 days from all Councillors by any method. If all Councillors have no concern a Proper Officer may respond accordingly to the consultation. If any Councillor has concerns a Proper Officer will seek an extension of the deadline from the consulting body so the matter can be considered at the next scheduled meeting of the Council. If an extension is not possible a Proper Officer will convene a meeting of the Planning Committee. Where the members of the council are unable to attend a meeting before the next scheduled meeting, the council delegates authority to a Proper Officer to respond to the application on the council's behalf. In doing so a Proper Officer may seek to obtain representations from any member of the council by any method in order to inform the response. The response will be reported to the next meeting of the Council.
- 13.3. With regard to planning applications - if a member has a personal interest (e.g. as a neighbour) that member may make a statement to the Parish Council meeting but then

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they must leave the meeting, unless a dispensation has been granted by the Council, while discussions take place. A member with a personal interest will not participate in the discussion even if a dispensation to remain has been granted.

14. Execution and sealing of legal deeds

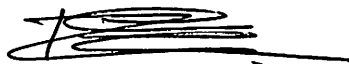
- 14.1. A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- 14.2. Subject to 14.1 above, any two Councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.

15. Standing Orders

- 15.1. These and any other Standing Orders will be reviewed annually by the Clerk and the Chairman, and any amendments will be decided by the Council.
- 15.2. During the course of meetings of the Council, the Chairman's decision as to the interpretation of the Standing Orders will be final. In cases of doubt, the Council will seek the advice of the Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils.
- 15.3. The Council may resolve to suspend a Standing Order, other than one that incorporates a mandatory statutory requirement, in order to progress the business of the Council, and such decision will be included in the minutes. The suspension will not be taken lightly, will be time-limited and requires a majority of at least two thirds of members (i.e. 6:2 = 2/3rds rounded up).

These Standing Orders, which update the 13th December 2023 version, were adopted by Boddington Parish Council at a meeting held on 12th March 2025

Chairman's signature:



Date: 12 March 2025