

Standing Orders 2026

The Standing Orders of the Parish Council supplement a number of statutory provisions which regulate the constitution, functions and organisation of parish councils. The principal provisions are:

Local Government Act 1972, sections 9-16A: Constitution, elections of councillors, annual meeting, election of chairman and vice-chairman, and parish meetings;

Local Government Act 1972, sections 79-98: Qualifications for and disqualification from election, casual vacancies, interests;

Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12 (Meetings and Proceedings of Local Authorities): paragraphs 7-13 (parish councils), and 14-22 (parish meetings);

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (exclusion of public from meetings).

Listed at Annex A, and available on the Parish Council website, are a number of documents which further govern the work of the Council, Councillors and Clerk. They should be reviewed regularly.

Listed at Annex B are other matters relevant to the Council's work which should be reviewed at least annually.

Also attached are:

Note on the procedure for Parish Meetings;

Note on the procedure for filling casual vacancies.

STANDING ORDER 1: ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

1. In an election year the Council meets for its annual meeting within 14 days of the election. In any other year the annual meeting takes place on any day in May.
2. The first business at the annual meeting is the election of the Chair. The outgoing Chair will preside until the new Chair is elected.
3. Any Councillor wishing to be elected as Chair must put their name forward, and be proposed by another Councillor and seconded by a third Councillor. In the case of an equality of votes the outgoing Chair has a casting vote.
4. If, in an election year, the outgoing Chair has not been re-elected as a Councillor, they nevertheless preside until the new Chair is elected. In the election of the new Chair the outgoing Chair does not have an original vote, but does have a casting vote.
5. The incoming Chair signs the acceptance of office form.

6. A Vice-Chair is then elected using the procedure in paragraph 3, with the incoming Chair having a casting vote.
7. The agenda of the annual meeting may include agreement, if necessary with amendments, of the documents listed at Annex A, but consideration of them may be deferred to a later meeting.

STANDING ORDER 2: OTHER MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

1. The Council will meet at least three further times in the year on dates to be agreed at the annual meeting. Those dates may subsequently be amended.
2. The Chair may at any time convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council to discuss particular matters which in the Chair's view cannot wait until the next ordinary meeting.
3. If within seven days of being requested in writing to do so by at least two Councillors the Chair does not convene an extraordinary meeting to discuss particular matters, those Councillors may direct the Clerk to convene an extraordinary meeting to discuss those matters.

STANDING ORDER 3: COMMITTEES

1. The Council will appoint at the annual meeting a Finance and General Purposes Committee and a Staffing Committee, and may at any meeting appoint one or more other Committees.
2. The Chair of the Council is a member of all Committees.
3. The Council will decide which other Councillors will be members of each Committee, and will set out the duration of the Committee's appointment and its remit, including the limits of any spending it is authorised to incur.
4. The Council will decide the dates of meetings of Committees, but a Committee may where necessary itself decide to vary the dates of meetings, or to hold additional meetings.
5. At its first meeting a Committee will elect its Chair and Vice-Chair. Any Councillor wishing to be elected as Chair or Vice-Chair must put their name forward, and be proposed by another Councillor and seconded by a third Councillor.
6. Following each meeting of a Committee, the Clerk will appoint a Councillor who is not a member of the Committee to substitute for a member at the next Committee meeting if the Committee would otherwise not be quorate.
7. A Committee may make decisions on matters within its remit, or may refer a matter to the Council for decision.

STANDING ORDER 4: ADVISERS

1. The Council, or a Committee, may appoint one or more advisers to advise on particular topics.
2. Advisers may be appointed for a full term until the next annual meeting, or for a specific period.
3. Advisers may speak at a meeting, but do not have a vote.

STANDING ORDER 5: ADVISORY COMMITTEES

1. The Council, or a Committee, may appoint one or more Advisory Committees to advise on specific issues within a set time, or to advise on specific topics without a limit of time. They report back to the Council, or to a Committee, as requested or as they see fit.
2. The members of Advisory Committees may include one or more Councillors, but are not required to do so.
3. Advisory Committees fix their own dates, times and places for meetings. They do not meet in the presence of the public, do not need the Clerk to be present at meetings, and do not take formal minutes.

STANDING ORDER 6: MEETINGS

1. This Standing Order applies to meetings of the Council and of Committees, but not to meetings of Advisory Committees.
2. A summons to attend a meeting must be sent to those Councillors and Advisers entitled to attend the meeting at least three clear days before the meeting. 'Clear days' do not include the day the summons is sent, the day of the meeting, Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays or bank holidays.
3. The quorum of a meeting is three.
4. The Chair presides at meetings. In their absence, the Vice-Chair presides. If both are absent, a Councillor chosen by the Councillors present presides.
5. Decisions are taken by consensus unless the chair of the meeting or another Councillor asks for a vote to be taken, in which case the motion must be proposed and seconded. In the case of an equality of votes the chair of the meeting has a casting vote.
6. A Councillor may request that the record of the voting on any question indicates who voted for and against that question.

7. The first items on the agenda are apologies for absence, declarations of interest, and approval (if necessary after correction) of the minutes of the previous meeting.
8. Thereafter items will be considered in the order on the agenda unless the chair of the meeting directs that consideration of a particular item should be brought forward or deferred.
9. The Clerk will place items on the agenda for discussion after agreement with the Chair, who will take into consideration requests from Councillors. If two or more Councillors request in writing at least five clear days before a meeting that an item should be included on the agenda for that meeting, it must be included. Discussion of it can be deferred only with the agreement of all the Councillors who have requested its inclusion.
10. If a Councillor moves, and another Councillor seconds, an amendment to a motion on the agenda, that amendment will be discussed and voted on before the substantive motion is considered.
11. Each Councillor and Adviser entitled to attend the meeting is allowed to speak at least once on each agenda item. Subject to this, the order of speaking is at the discretion of the chair of the meeting, who may direct that no speech shall exceed three minutes.
12. The chair of the meeting keeps order at the meeting. The chair of the meeting, or any other Councillor, may move that a Councillor or Adviser should cease to participate in the meeting, or that any person should be excluded from the meeting. The motion must be seconded, and the chair of the meeting does not have a casting vote. In the case of an equality of votes, the motion fails.

STANDING ORDER 7: INTERESTS

1. This Standing Order applies to meetings of the Council and of Committees, but not to meetings of Advisory Committees. The Code of Conduct also applies.
2. A Councillor having an interest in the subject of an agenda item must declare that interest at the start of the meeting, or at the start of discussion of that item.
3. A Councillor who, or whose spouse or civil partner, has a direct pecuniary interest or other direct conflict of interests in the subject of an agenda item must withdraw from the meeting for the discussion of that item.
4. The fact that a Councillor has previously expressed an interest in or a view on the subject of an agenda item does not of itself require that Councillor to withdraw from the meeting. They may take part in discussion of the subject, and may vote on it.

5. Where the Council or Committee has, by a vote or otherwise, reached a concluded view on a subject in which a Councillor has a direct pecuniary interest or other direct conflict of interests, such that any further action by the Council or Committee will no longer be influenced by that interest, that Councillor may take part in further discussion of the subject, and may vote on it.

STANDING ORDER 8: PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

1. This Standing Order applies to meetings of the Council and of Committees other than the Staffing Committee, but not to meetings of Advisory Committees.
2. Meetings are open to the public, and a person present may make a note of the meeting or may film, photograph or make a recording of the meeting, but may not make an oral report or commentary during the meeting.
3. The Council or a Committee may resolve under section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the public from discussion of matters which are confidential, or for other special reasons arising from the nature of the business.
4. The agenda may include an item allowing up to fifteen minutes for the public to ask questions on matters relating to the Council's current activities. Notice of such questions should be given to the Clerk 48 hours in advance of the meeting. A question may be answered orally at the meeting, or in writing after the meeting.
5. Members of the public may, with the permission of the chair of the meeting, make representations on agenda items in which they have a special interest. This applies in particular to planning applications whose outcome may affect them. Such representations will be limited to three minutes unless the chair allows longer. Where a number of members of the public wish to make representations to the same or similar effect, the chair has a discretion to allow only some or one of them.
6. The chair of the meeting may at any time invite a Surrey County Councillor, Elmbridge Borough Councillor, East Surrey Councillor, a Parish Councillor not being a member of a Committee in session, or a member of the public to advise or assist the Council or Committee.

STANDING ORDER 9: AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS

An amendment of these Standing Orders requires the submission at least five clear days before the meeting of the Council at which it is to be considered of a written request, signed by at least three Councillors, setting out the amendment of the text which is proposed, with an explanation of the reasons for the proposed change.

ANNEX A

DOCUMENTS WHICH FURTHER GOVERN THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL, COUNCILLORS AND CLERK, AND WHICH SHOULD BE REVIEWED REGULARLY

Members Code of Conduct
Register of Members' Interests
Financial Regulations
Risk Management Policy and Assessment
Data Protection Policy
General Privacy Notice
Freedom of Information Policy
Communications and Social Media and Policy
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Grants Policy and Guidance
Small Grants Policy and Guidance
Complaints Procedure
Document Retention Policy
Equality and Diversity Policy
Health & Safety Policy
Dignity at Work Policy
Sickness at Work Policy

ANNEX B

OTHER MATTERS RELEVANT TO THE COUNCIL'S WORK WHICH SHOULD BE REVIEWED AT LEAST ANNUALLY

Arrangements for cooperation with [EBC and SCC] [East Surrey Council]
Representation on or work with external bodies, and arrangements for reporting back
Inventory of the Council's assets
Subscriptions to other bodies
Insurance cover
The possible future exercise of the general power of competence