



# **GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL**

## **STANDING ORDERS**

**Adopted by Full Council on  
27 April 2017**

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## Section One: Meetings

Mandatory for Full Council meetings ●

Mandatory for committee meetings ●

References to committees shall apply equally to sub-committees

1. **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.** ●
2. **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, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning shall not count.** ●●
3. **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.** ●●
4. After Apologies for Absence have been given the person presiding may for a period of up to fifteen minutes in total permit members of the public present at the meeting, and on the electoral roll of Godalming Town Council; or a young person under 18 whose parent or guardian is on the electoral roll; or with business premises in the town (evidenced by a business rates bill); or user of the Town Council's premises; to do one of the following:
  - a) make a statement; or
  - b) ask a question relating only to the business of the Council or relevant Committee (as applicable); or
  - c) present a petition (of at least ten signatures);provided that:
  - i. at least two clear working days' notice of the matter shall have been given to the Town Clerk in writing providing details of the subject matter and of the resident and if relevant the rest of the question. The Town Clerk shall be satisfied that it is a proper matter to be brought before the Council or Committee;
  - ii. the Town Clerk shall put a written copy of any question before the members present at the meeting;

- iii. the person presiding at the meeting may, at their discretion, defer the presentation of the statement, question or petition until the appropriate point in the agenda is reached;
  - iv. no more than four members of the public shall be permitted to speak on any one subject;
  - v. the member of the public shall identify himself/herself before speaking at the meeting;
  - vi. all matters shall be addressed to the Chairman and the time allowed for making a statement or asking a question shall not exceed four minutes;
  - vii. the person presiding may allow councillors to ask questions of the member of the public to clarify what is being said.
  - viii. all responses to statements, questions or petitions shall be given by the person presiding at the meeting without debate, save that the person presiding may direct that a response be referred to an employee for a written or oral response.
5. Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting is permitted but no-one present at the meeting may give an oral report or commentary during the meeting. The filming, recording or photographing or other reporting of children and vulnerable adults shall only take place with the consent of a responsible adult<sup>1</sup>. At the start of a meeting the Chairman will remind everyone in attendance and who will be participating in the meeting that they may be filmed, recorded, photographed or otherwise reported about. The Council may make and keep its own audio recording of proceedings for the purpose of clarifying any perceived misinterpretation or published misinformation concerning the conduct or decisions of the council. Any such recording shall be kept securely and destroyed after two years. ● ●
6. **In accordance with Standing Order 3 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.** ● ●
7. **Subject to Standing Orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman may in the Chairman's absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman (if any).** ●
8. **The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman, if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman**

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of a vulnerable adult a responsible adult is a medical professional, the individual's carer or legal guardian; in the case of a child it is the individual's parent, legal guardian or teacher.

- and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting. ●**
9. **Subject to Standing Order 18 below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors present and voting thereon. ●●**
  10. **The Chairman 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 the Chairman gave on original vote. (See also Standing Orders 27 and 28 below.) ●●**
  11. **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 their vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda. ●
  12. **The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent. ●●**
  13. A councillor shall submit apologies for absence to the Town Clerk prior to a meeting.
  14. During a prolonged period of absence a meeting may be asked to approve, by a resolution, a councillor's reason for absence, such resolution shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the approval was given.
  15. **The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors in respect of the entire meeting. ●●**
  16. **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** as will whether or not that councillor left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered. ●●
  17. **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one third of the whole number of members of the Council are present (that is seven councillors) and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three. ●**
  18. **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. ●●

19. Meetings shall not exceed a period of three hours or by resolution of the meeting three hours and thirty minutes.



## Section Two: Ordinary Council meetings

*See also Section One above*

20. **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.**
21. **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.**
22. **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6.30pm.**
23. **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.**
24. **The election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.**
25. **The Town Mayor (as Chairman of the Council), unless the individual has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until a new Town Mayor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
26. **The Deputy Town Mayor (as Vice-Chairman of the Council), unless the individual has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Town Mayor at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
27. **In an election year, if the current Town Mayor has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, that Town Mayor shall nonetheless preside at the annual meeting until a successor Town Mayor has been elected. The current Town Mayor shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Town Mayor but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
28. **In an election year, if the current Town Mayor has been re-elected as a member of the Council, that Town Mayor shall preside at the meeting until a new Town Mayor has been elected. The current Town Mayor may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Town Mayor and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

29. Following the election of the Town Mayor/Chairman of the Council and Deputy Town Mayor/Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows.
- i. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council and to receive and note minutes of and/or to determine recommendations made by committees.
  - ii. Receipt of nominations to existing committees.
  - iii. Appointment of any new committees, confirmation of the terms of reference, the number of members (including, if appropriate, substitute councillors) and receipt of nominations to them.
  - iv. Review and adoption of appropriate Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
  - v. In a year of elections, review of arrangements for the Godalming Joint Burial Committee and receipt of nominations to that Committee.
  - vi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back.
  - vii. In a year of elections, to make arrangements with a view to the council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future.
  - viii. Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the Full Council for the year ahead, if not already set.

## Section Three: Proper Officer

30. The Council's Proper Officer shall be either (i) the Town Clerk or such other employee as may be nominated by the Council from time to time or (ii) 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.
31. Where under the Local Government Act 1972 or any other enactment, or statutory instrument or regulation made under authority of such Act or instrument any function is required to be carried out by the Proper Officer then for the purposes of the following functions under the Local Government Act 1972 viz:

Section 115(2)	Receipt of money due from other officers
Section 146(1)	Declaration and certificates with regard to investments
Section 228(3)	Accounts

The Council shall appoint an appropriate officer to be the Responsible Finance Officer.

32. The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following:
- i. **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 and a meeting of a committee at least three clear days before the meeting.**
  - ii. **Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**
  - iii. Subject to Standing Orders 34-38 below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least seven days before the meeting confirming the withdrawal of it.
  - iv. **Convene a meeting of Full Council for the election of a Town Mayor, occasioned by a casual vacancy in that office, in accordance with Standing Order 32 i above.**
  - v. Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.
  - vi. **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
  - vii. **Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.**

- viii. Retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
  - ix. Keep proper records required before and after meetings;
  - x. 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.
  - xi. Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.
  - xii. Manage the organisation, storage of and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form.
  - xiii. Arrange for legal deeds to be sealed using the Council's common seal and witnessed (See also Standing Orders 90 and 91.)
  - xiv. Retain custody of the seal of the Council which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
  - xv. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in Standing Orders.
  - xvi. After consultation with the Chairman of the Policy & Management Committee, and where appropriate the Chairman of the Joint Burial Committee, along with the appropriate Ward Members, respond on behalf of Godalming Town Council/Godalming Joint Burial Committee to interested party's planning notification letters received by Godalming Town Council or the Joint Burial Committee relating to applications on premises adjacent to council land/property.
33. The Responsible Finance Officer shall do the following:
- i. 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.

## **Section Four: Motions requiring written notice**

34. In accordance with Standing Order 32 iii above, no motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Council's Proper Officer at least nine clear days before the next meeting.
35. The Proper Officer may, before including a motion in the agenda received in accordance with Standing Order 34 above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
36. If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with Standing Order 34 above 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 four clear days before the meeting.
37. If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or 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 or rejected in the agenda.
38. Having consulted the Chairman or councillors pursuant to Standing Order 37 above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
39. Notice of every motion received in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders shall be numbered in the order received and shall be entered in a book, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
40. 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 in a book for that purpose, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
41. 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.

## Section Five: Motions not requiring written notice

42. Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice:
- i. To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
  - ii. To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
  - iii. To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
  - iv. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
  - v. To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
  - vi. To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
  - vii. To close or adjourn debate.
  - viii. To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or an employee.
  - ix. To appoint a committee or any councillors (including substitutes) thereto.
  - x. To receive nominations to a committee.
  - xi. To dissolve a committee.
  - xii. To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee.
  - xiii. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or an employee.
  - xiv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
  - xv. To authorise legal deeds to be sealed by the Council's common seal and witnessed.
- (See Standing Orders 90 and 91 below.)*
- xvi. To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
  - xvii. To extend the time limit for speeches.
  - xviii. To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
  - xix. To silence or exclude from the meeting a councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
  - xx. To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by Standing Orders.
  - xxi. To suspend any Standing Order except those which are mandatory by law.**
  - xxii. To adjourn the meeting.

- xxiii. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
  - xxiv. To answer questions from councillors.
43. If a motion falls within the terms of reference of a committee or within the delegated powers conferred on an employee, a referral of the same may be made to such committee or employee provided that the Chairman may direct for it to be dealt with at the present meeting for reasons of urgency or expedience.

## Section Six: Rules of debate

44. Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chairman's direction for reasons of expedience.
45. Subject to Standing Orders 34-38 above, a motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.
46. Subject to Standing Order 32 iii above, a motion included in an agenda not moved by the councillor who tabled it, may be treated as withdrawn.
47. A motion to amend an original or substantive motion shall not be considered unless proper notice has been given after the original or substantive motion has been seconded and notice of such amendment, shall, if required by the Chairman, be reduced to writing and handed to the Chairman who shall determine the order in which they are considered.
48. A councillor may move amendments to their own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder.
49. Any amendment to a motion shall be either:
  - i. to leave out words;
  - ii. to add words;
  - iii. to leave out words and add other words.

The amendment shall not negate the motion.
50. A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration.
51. Only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chairman. No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.
52. Subject to Standing Order 51 above, one or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.
53. Pursuant to Standing Order 51 above, the number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a councillor, is limited to one.
54. If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed



by the Chairman.

55. 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.
56. The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding two minutes.
57. 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.
58. Subject to Standing Orders 55 and 56 above, 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.
59. 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. A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the Standing Order which that councillor considers has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting which concerns the councillor.
60. A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman and the Chairman's decision shall be final.
61. 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.
62. Subject to Standing Order 58 above, when a councillor's motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except:
  - i. to amend the motion;
  - ii. to proceed to the next business;
  - iii. to adjourn the debate;
  - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
  - v. to ask a person to be silent or for that person to leave the meeting;
  - vi. to refer a motion to a committee for consideration;
  - vii. to exclude the public and press;

- viii. to adjourn the meeting;
  - ix. to suspend any Standing Order, except those which are mandatory.
63. In respect of Standing Order 62 iv above, the Chairman shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote. The Chairman shall call upon the mover of the motion under debate to exercise or waive their 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.

## Section Seven: Code of Conduct

64. All councillors shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.
65. All councillors shall undertake training in the Code of Conduct within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.
66. Unless granted a dispensation, a councillor shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which that councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest. The councillor may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
67. **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
68. A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer or by a meeting of the Council, or committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
69. A dispensation request shall confirm:
  - i. The description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
  - ii. Whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
  - iii. The date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
  - iv. An explanation as to why the dispensation is sought
70. Subject to standing orders 67 and 68 above, dispensations requests shall be considered by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required or at the beginning of the meeting of the council, or committee or for which the dispensation is required.
71. **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 68 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**

72. **Upon notification by the district or unitary council that a councillor has breached the Council's Code of Conduct, the council shall consider what, if any, action to take against that councillor. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office**

## **Section Eight: Questions**

73. A councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council provided two clear days' notice of the question has been given to the Proper Officer.
74. 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.
75. Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

## Section Nine: Minutes

76. If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.
77. 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 Standing Order 42iii above.
78. Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, 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.
79. If the Chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, that Chairman shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

“The Chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the ( ) held on [date] in respect of ( ) were a correct record but that view was not upheld by the majority of the ( ) and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
80. 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.

## **Section Ten: Disorderly conduct**

81. 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.
82. 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.
83. If a resolution made under Standing Order 82 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.

## **Section Eleven: Rescission of previous resolutions**

84. A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least 16 councillors of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
  
85. When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to Standing Order 84 above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months. This Standing Order and Standing Order 84 shall apply mutatis mutandis to the proceedings of Committees.



## **Section Twelve: Voting on appointments**

86. 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 Chairman's casting vote.

## **Section Thirteen: Expenditure**

87. Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
88. **The Council's Financial Regulations shall be reviewed once a year.**
89. **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 or to an employee.**

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## **Section Fourteen: Execution and sealing of legal deeds**

*See also Standing Order 42 xv above*

90. A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution.
  
91. **In accordance with a resolution made under Standing Order 90 above, the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of the Town Mayor (or in the Town Mayor's absence the Deputy Town Mayor) and another member of the Council. Both the Town Mayor (or Deputy Town Mayor) and the member shall sign the deed as witnesses.**

## Section Fifteen: Committees

*See also Standing Orders 1-19 above*

92. For the conduct of day to day business of the Council there shall be established four standing committees to be known as the:

- Policy & Management Committee
- Mayoralty Committee
- Audit Committee
- Staffing Committee

93. Each standing committee may appoint ad hoc advisory committees as they see fit.

94. The terms of reference of the standing committees shall be as follows:

### **Policy & Management Committee**

95. Purpose of the Policy & Management Committee

To address and, where appropriate, formulate policy for consideration by the Council; to manage the Council's financial and other assets as delegated by the Council; to secure the good governance of the Council's affairs, including the management of staffing and appointments, media relations, external relationships, committee arrangements and day to day business and to discharge the Council's functions relating to the local environment and infrastructure

96. Functions of the Policy & Management Committee

- i. To identify key policy issues facing the Council and to formulate, for the Council's consideration, its strategies and timetables for dealing with them;
- ii. To maintain an overview of Council initiatives and report to the Council on their impact and effectiveness;
- iii. To make recommendations to the Council on constitutional issues;
- iv. To ensure the Council is adequately resourced to achieve its aims;

- v. To prepare annual budgets reflecting the Council's agreed strategy and priorities, putting these forward for the Council's approval and recommend a precept to the Full Council;
- vi. To secure effective control of expenditure authorising items of expenditure on behalf of the Council and to scrutinising expenditure against budgets through the year;
- vii. To appoint the auditors of the accounts;
- viii. To consider the audited accounts and report on them to the Council;
- ix. To make recommendations to the Council on charges for the use of Council properties; and on other fees and charges;
- x. To decide on applications for grants made by local organisations;
- xi. To oversee the Council's banking and investment arrangements and keep investment policy under review;
- xii. To ensure the proper management of the properties and amenities owned, controlled or provided by the Council;
- xiii. To develop strategy on media relations, and to formulate policy on public participation;
- xiv. In consultation with the Town Clerk, to agree principles for the Management of Committee business;
- xv. To recommend appointment to outside bodies;
- xvi. To act as a channel for communications with external organisations;
- xvii. To prepare the Council's report presented at the Annual Town Meeting; and
- xviii. To oversee the maintenance and development of the Council's website.
- xix. To formulate, for the Council's consideration, policy towards the natural and built environment and principles to guide the Council's consideration of specific issues and proposals;
- xx. To consider and comment on policy proposals and initiatives by the Government or other authorities which have implications for the Town's environment, highways and amenities;
- xxi. To consider and comment on applications for planning permission and other matters within the terms of the Town and Country Planning Acts and related legislation which have been referred to the committee by a ward councillor;
- xxii. On behalf of the Council, to take all action that the Council can lawfully take in relation to such matters.

**Staffing Committee**

## 97. Purpose of the Staffing Committee

To consider all matters relating to the appointment and management of Council staff.

## 98. Functions of the Staffing Committee

- i. To oversee the appointment and management of Council staff, delegating responsibility to the Town Clerk as they consider appropriate, or to an interview panel, but acting subject to the approval of the Full Council in relation to the appointment of the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer
- ii. To provide support to and management of the Town Clerk. Monitor and manage hours of working, home working, annual/flexi/compassionate/time off in lieu leave and absences and sick leave.
- iii. Review employee's remuneration and make recommendations thereon to The Council
- iv. Review Conditions of Employment, Contracts of Employment and Job Descriptions as appropriate to ensure they meet the needs of the Council and comply with relevant legislation and established good practice
- v. To review the staffing structures to ensure they are sufficient to deliver the aims of The Council
- vi. Develop, implement and review Employment related Policies
- vii. Manage The Council's compliance with Employment legislation
- viii. Ensure an appropriate Appraisal system is in place and monitor the effectiveness of the system
- ix. Provide appropriately trained Members to conduct the Appraisal(s) of the Town Clerk
- x. Set appropriate SMART objectives for the Town Clerk based on the aims and priorities of The Council
- xi. Hold regular informal meetings with the Town Clerk and Staff to discuss and review employment matters
- xii. Ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to support staff development and training and to ensure that such training is in line with the allocated funds.
- xiii. Make appropriate recommendations to The Council where an identified training need would exceed the allocated funding
- xiv. Manage Disciplinary and Grievance procedures in accordance with the

appropriate council policy and processes

- xv. Where necessary recommend appropriate actions to The Council
- xvi. If required appoint an appeals panel drawn from Members of the Staffing Committee or from an external body as appropriate to the circumstances -

#### 99. Delegated Spending Authority

In order to undertake its functions, the Staffing Committee is authorised to spend up to £5,000 per annum allocated from the professional fees revenue budget when such expenditure is agreed by a resolution of the committee. Expenditure requirements in excess of the authorised limit to be agreed in advance of expenditure commitment by resolution of the Council or, if expediency is required the Policy & Management Committee.

### **Mayoralty Committee**

#### 100. Purpose of the Mayoralty Committee

To consider and make recommendations to the Full Council on the selection and appointment of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor

#### 101. Functions of the Mayoralty Committee

- i. To recommend to the Full Council a policy for the appointment of Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor and to keep it under review;
- ii. To nominate a Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor each year for approval by the Council;
- iii. To consider and determine in consultation with the Town Mayor all matters relating to the Council's civic and ceremonial functions, and events; and
- iv. To recommend to Full Council an allowance for the Town Mayor.

### **Audit Committee**

#### 102. Purpose of the Audit Committee

To provide assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment, and to oversee the financial reporting process.

#### 103. Functions of the Audit Committee

- i. To consider the effectiveness of the Council's risk management arrangements,

- the control environment and associated anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements;
- ii. To review annually the effectiveness of internal audit;
  - iii. To receive all reports from the internal auditor; and
  - iv. To review the financial statements, external auditor's opinion and reports to members, and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by external audit

### **Accountability of Committees**

104. The Standing Committees shall be accountable to the Council and shall report to each meeting of the Council except for the Statutory Annual Meeting. Composition of Committees
105. The Policy & Management Committee shall comprise 19 councillors. The Town Mayor shall not be a member of the Policy & Management Committee.
106. The Staffing Committee shall comprise six councillors of whom one will be the Chairman of the Policy & Management Committee, The Town Mayor shall not be a member of the Staffing Committee
107. Meetings of the Staffing Committee shall be called by the Chairman of the Committee as required; the Committee shall be responsible for nominating the Committee Clerk, who may be drawn from The Council's Officers or Committee Members as appropriate, the Chairman is to ensure that minutes are provided within 4 days of the close of the meeting.
108. The Mayoralty Committee shall comprise six councillors of which at least three (if that is possible) shall have served as Town Mayor.
109. Meetings of the Mayoralty Committee shall be called by the Town Clerk as required; the Town Clerk shall be responsible for Clerking the Committee.
110. The Audit Committee shall comprise five councillors, one of whom shall be a Godalming Town Council member of the Godalming Joint Burial Committee, The Town Mayor shall not be a member of the Audit Committee
111. Meetings of the Audit Committee shall be called by the Chairman of the Committee as required; the Responsible Finance Officer shall be responsible for Clerking the



Committee.

**Substitutes**

112. Substitutes may be used when councillors are unable to attend meetings of the Mayoralty Committee or Staffing Committee or Audit Committee or Neighbourhood Plan Ad Hoc Advisory Group. Such substitutes may be called for any Committee meeting up to 4.00 pm on the day of the meeting.
113. Substitutes shall be of the same political group as that of the councillor being substituted.
114. The maximum number of substitutes permitted per Committee shall be as follows:

Staffing Committee	3
Audit Committee	3
Mayoralty Committee	3
Neighbourhood Plan Ad Hoc Advisory Group	3

(Substitutes for the Mayoralty Committee must be qualified in accordance with Standing Order 111.)

**Frequency of Committee Meetings**

115. As far as practicable the Policy & Management Committee will meet approximately every six weeks. The Staffing Committee, Audit Committee, Mayoralty Committee and the Neighbourhood Plan Ad Hoc Advisory Group will meet as and when required.

**Appointment of Committee Members**

116. At least four weeks before the first business meeting of the Council after 1 May each year, the Town Clerk shall invite every councillor to state his/her preference for service on the Staffing Committee, Audit Committee, the Mayoralty Committee and/or and the Neighbourhood Plan Ad Hoc Advisory Group. The Town Clerk shall also determine the number of places on those four Committees which are to be filled by the members of each political group represented on the Council, ensuring, as far as possible, that the allocation of places reflects the balance of political representation on the Council as a whole.
117. The Council shall then appoint councillors to Committees at its first business meeting, having regard both to the preferences expressed by members and the provisions of Standing Order 116.

**Term of Office of Standing Committees**

118. The Council will determine the term of office of members of Standing Committees. In the absence of any decision, by the Council, to the contrary committee members will hold office until:
- i. They resign, collectively or individually and their successors are appointed; or
  - ii. A review of committee places by the Council; or
  - iii. Resignation as a member or members of the Council; or
  - iv. The first business meeting of the next Local Government Year. In an election year they shall retire when the Council is dissolved for the election.

**Election of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen**

119. Each Standing Committee shall elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman from among their number at meetings convened for this purpose or during the annual meeting of the Council at which the members of Standing Committees are appointed.

120. The term of office of Committee Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen shall be the same as that of their Committee. Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen may be re-elected for second and subsequent terms of office.

### **Procedure at Standing Committees**

121. Agendas and any supporting papers, reports and minutes of all standing committees shall be circulated to all councillors at the same time as they are circulated to members of committees with the exception of confidential papers, reports and minutes of the Staffing Committee, which shall only be circulated to members of the relevant committee.
122. Any councillor, having given notice to the Chairman and the Town Clerk may attend any meeting of any Standing Committee and may address that meeting on an agenda item with the leave of the person in the chair for that meeting.
123. The provisions of Standing Orders 1 to 19 shall apply mutatis mutandis to all Committee proceedings provided that where, at any Committee, any resolution is carried by a majority of less than two votes, then immediately after the vote is taken it shall be open to any councillor present to propose that the motion shall be referred to the Town Council in the form of a recommendation for adoption at its next meeting. If such a proposition is supported by not less than one third of the councillors present at the meeting then the motion to which it relates shall be treated as a recommendation instead of a decision taken under delegated powers.
124. Standing Committees may, at their discretion, invite up to two individuals who are not members, including those who are not councillors, to take part in their discussions on particular subjects for periods up to one year. Such individuals may receive the Committee papers which relate to their subject; but may not attend for any business declared to be confidential by the Committee and may not vote on any Committee decisions, the period of such an individual's participation may be extended beyond one year.
125. Every Standing Committee may delegate to the Town Clerk, powers to exercise any of their functions in case of urgency or for other special reasons. The Town Clerk, if exercising such a power, must inform the Committee Chairman (or in his/her absence the Vice Chairman) before exercising the power and shall report on the matter to the next meeting of the Committee.

**Godalming Joint Burial Committee**

126. At the first business meeting of the Council following an election, six councillors shall be elected as the Council's representatives on the Godalming Joint Burial Committee to serve for the ensuing four-year term. The Joint Burial Committee is formed with Busbridge Parish Council who elect two Parish councillors to serve on the Committee.

**Working Parties**

127. Every Standing Committee may appoint one or more Working Parties for purposes, which shall be specified in terms of reference by the Standing Committee. The Committee shall also prescribe the time limit, not exceeding one-year, within which the Working Party must complete its work. A Working Party shall be disbanded as soon as it has completed the tasks given to it.
128. Each Working Party will provide a regular update to appointing Standing Committee, that update shall form a standing item on the agenda of that Committee. Otherwise the procedure of the Working Party may be informal.

**Ad hoc Advisory Committees**

129. Every Standing Committee may appoint one or more ad hoc advisory committees for purposes, which shall be specified in terms of reference by the Standing Committee.
130. The Standing Committee will determine the membership of the advisory committee noting that all the members of an advisory committee may be non-councillors.
131. The provisions of Standing Orders 1 to 19 shall apply mutatis mutandis to all advisory committee proceedings (but only in so far as those provisions can apply to non-councillors). Non-councillor members of an advisory committee are not bound by the Code of Conduct but are expected to declare pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests at meetings of the advisory committee as though they were bound by the Code.
132. Agendas and any supporting papers, reports and minutes of an advisory committees shall be circulated to all members of that advisory committee. Reports and minutes of an advisory committee will be circulated to all councillors at the same time as they are circulated to members of the committee and will be received on the next agenda of the parent Committee.

## Section Sixteen Extraordinary meetings

*See also Section One above*

133. **The Town Mayor may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
134. **If the Town Mayor 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.**
135. The Chairman of a committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or at any time.
136. If the Chairman of a committee does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested to do so by two councillors, those two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by two councillors.

## Section Seventeen: Financial Matters

137. 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.
138. The Responsible Finance Officer shall report a summary of payments made to each ordinary meeting of the Policy & Management Committee. The vouchers supporting those payments shall be tabled at each such meeting for inspection. 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.
139. **The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year** at its meeting before the end of January.
140. Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Responsible Finance Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than December.
141. The Council shall consider and approve Financial Regulations drawn up by the Responsible Finance 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 and the receipt of regular reports from the Internal Auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
  - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments;
  - v. procurement policies (subject to Standing Order 142 below) including the setting of values for different procedures where the contract has an estimated value of less than £60,000.
142. **Financial Regulations shall confirm that a proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £60,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in Standing Order 143 below.**

143. Subject to additional requirements in the Financial Regulations of the Council the formal tender process shall comprise, as a minimum, the following steps:
- i. a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up;
  - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
  - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
  - iv. tenders are to be submitted, in a sealed marked envelope, to the Proper Officer by a stated date and time;
  - v. tenders submitted are to be opened, after the stated closing date and time, by the Proper Officer and at least one member of the Council;
  - vi. tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of the Council or Committee.
144. Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.
145. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed £138,893 (or other threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time) the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No.5, as amended) and the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No. 6, as amended) apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with EU procurement rules.**

## **Section Eighteen: Canvassing of and recommendations by Councillors**

146. 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. The Proper Officer shall disclose the requirements of this Standing Order to every candidate.
147. 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, nevertheless, any such person may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.
148. This Standing Order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.



## **Section Nineteen: Inspection of documents, confidential or sensitive Information & unauthorised activities**

149. Subject to Standing Orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a councillor may, for the purpose of official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a 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.
150. The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest
151. Councillors and staff shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.
152. A councillor in breach of the provisions of Standing Order 151 above may be removed from a committee by a resolution of the Council
153. Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council or a committee:
  - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
  - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

## **Section Twenty: Matters affecting Council staff**

154. If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the body meeting has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to Standing Order 3 above.
155. Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior employee present shall notify the Chairman of the Staffing Committee or, in the absence of that Chairman, the Chairman of the Policy & Management Committee if any absence is likely to occasion the closing of the Town Council's offices. The Town Clerk shall make a summary report of staff absences to each meeting of the Staffing Committee.
156. Annual staff appraisals shall be conducted in accordance with the Council's Appraisal Scheme
157. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior employee (or other employees) shall contact the Chairman of the Staffing Committee or, in the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman of the Staffing Committee in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Staffing Committee.
158. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance and disciplinary matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by an employee relates to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Staffing Committee this shall be communicated to the Chairman of the Policy & Management Committee and the Chairman of the Policy & Management Committee shall determine whether the matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Staffing Committee or by resolution of the Policy & Management Committee.
159. Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of Council employees shall keep written records of all meetings relating to their performance, and capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.

160. The Council shall keep written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected.
161. Records documenting reasons for an employee's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for the same.
162. Only the Town Clerk or the Chairman of the Staffing Committee or, in the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman of the Staffing Committee shall have access to employee records referred to in Standing Orders 160 and 161 above if so justified.
163. Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in Standing Orders 160 and 161 above shall be provided only to the Town Clerk or the Chairman of the Staffing Committee.

## **Section Twenty-one: Freedom of Information Act**

164. 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.
  
165. Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman of the Policy & Management Committee. The said committee 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 set out under Standing Order 32 x above.

## **Section Twenty-two: Relations with the press/media**

166. 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.
167. 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.

## **Section Twenty-four: Standing Orders generally**

168. 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.
169. A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's Standing Orders, not mandatory by law, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of as least two councillors.
170. The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's Standing Orders to a councillor upon delivery of that councillor's declaration of acceptance of office.
171. The Chairman's decision as to the application of Standing Orders at meetings shall be final.
172. A councillor's failure to observe Standing Orders more than three times in one meeting may result in that councillor being excluded from the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders.