

# Stickford Parish Council Standing Orders 2025

## 1 Meetings

- a) Meetings of the STICKFORD PARISH COUNCIL shall be held in each year on such dates and times and at such place as the Council may direct.
- b) All parish meeting must have an agenda compiled and set by the clerk in conjunction with the chairman.
- c) Soon after the commencement of each Council meeting, there will be a fifteen minute period when members of the public are invited to attend and raise any cares and/or concerns that they may wish the Council to consider. The Clerk must publish the times of these formal meetings and all Council members should attend.
- d) Minutes will be taken by the Clerk. The Clerk will take note of any issues raised to deal with later. The formal meeting must be formally closed after the agenda business has been completed.
- e) The public must be reminded that they are welcome to stay to the Council meeting but that they cannot speak whilst the Council is in session, except by permission of the Chairman. (see Standing Orders 24,25,26,27 and 28).
- f) The Parish Council may hold additional informal discussions. The Clerk is to make notes, and any decision and/or resolutions will be taken forward to the next formal Council meeting.
- g) All councillors must submit an apology and reason, if they are unable to attend a Statutory meeting.

## 2 The Statutory Parish Meetings

In an election year the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office and in a year which is not an election year the Annual Parish Council Meeting shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.

- a) In addition to the Statutory Annual Meeting of the Parish Council the council will also have an Annual Open Meeting of the Parish during May of each year.
- b) Other formal statutory meetings (5 minimum) shall be held in each year on such dates and times and at such place as the Council may direct. Generally in January, March, July, September and December.

### **3. Other Meetings**

a) The council may decide to have informal discussion meetings during each year where the public may not attend due to the issue being discussed. At these discussion meetings no issue can be ratified but are noted as draft information to be approved or not approved at the next formal meeting as an agenda item.

b) The council may have extraordinary meeting called where two or more councillors or six residents on the Stickford electoral role request a meeting outside of the normal formal meeting dates. In order to arrange an extraordinary meeting all persons calling for such a meeting must apply to the clerk in writing with all signatures with a clear description of the issue to be discussed. At these meetings no resolutions can be approved until the issue as a draft document is an item identified on the agenda at the next formal meeting.

### **4. Attendees at all formal meetings**

#### **a) Chairman of the Meeting**

The person presiding at a meeting may exercise all the powers and duties of the Chairman in relation to the conduct of the meeting.

#### **b) All Elected Councillors**

Each councillor is to attend but any reason for non attendance is to be reported to the Clerk before the meeting starting time. Each councillor is to be in possession of the previous meeting minutes and agenda for the meeting prior to the meeting.

Any councillor who in leader of any committee must be able to report all activity of that committee in writing to the meeting and must alert the clerk 7 days in advance if there are any issues that may need resolution in order the issue to be placed as an item on the agenda.

#### **c) Proper Officer Clerk**

Where a statute, regulation or order confers function or duties on the proper officer of the Council in the following cases, he/she shall be the clerk or nominated officer:

To receive declarations of acceptance of office.

To receive and record notices disclosing interests at meetings.

To receive and ensure that plans and documents are retained.

To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council.

To receive copies of bylaws made by another local authority.

To sign and issue the invitation to attend meetings of the Council.

To keep proper records for all Council meetings

To liaise with the chairman on producing the draft minutes of all council meetings

**The public are allowed at all formal meeting see para 1c above.**

## **5. Quorum of the Council**

Three councillors or one-third of the total full council, whichever is the greater, shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the Council.

If a quorum is not present or if during a meeting the number of councillors present (not counting those debarred by reason of a declared interest) falls below the required quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned and business not transacted and shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Chairman may set.

## **6. Voting**

Members shall vote by show of hands or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot.

The chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in any case of an equality of votes may give a casting vote whether or not he/she gave an original vote.

If the person presiding at the annual meeting of the Parish Council would have ceased to be a member of the council but for the statutory provisions which preserve the membership of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman until the end of their term of office he may not give an original vote in an election for Chairman.

The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Chairman.

## **7. Questions and issues for the inclusion on the declared agenda**

Any question or issue that any councillor or electorate wishes to raise within the formal agenda must give to the Clerk at least 7 days before the meeting in writing, however any issue or question raised after the 7 day deadline can still be raised but it may not be resolved at the meeting.

The Agenda can be changed by the Chairman with the approval of the council.

## **8. Order of Business AGM**

At each Annual Meeting of the Parish Council the first business shall be:-

- To elect a Chairman of the Council
- To receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, it shall be received by the Clerk within 7 days.
- To elect a Vice-Chairman of the Council.
- To decide when any declarations of acceptance of office by Vice Chairman and other councillors which have not been received as provided by the Clerk shall be received within 7 days.
- In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.

- To appoint the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) normally the Clerk
- To appoint the Planning delegate, and shall thereafter follow the order set out in the Standing Order 18
- To appoint any other committee /delegate or sub committee.
- All committees shall have agreed terms of reference
- To appoint the Internal Auditor (should be a competent person and not connected with the Parish Business)

## **9. Order of business Annual Meeting of the Parish**

At the Annual Meeting of the Parish the first business shall be to appoint a Chairman, if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be absent. To observe the council's code of conduct.

Normal procedure is to follow the prescribed agenda which must include the annual statement of the parish by the chairman followed by a time for any response from the electorate of the parish.

## **10. Order of formal statutory meetings normally 5 per year**

i) After the Chairman's welcome there is the recommended 15 minutes for electorate to raise issues of their concern.

ii) Absentee councillors and proposed agenda agreed

iii) Declarations of interest as per items listed on the agenda

iv) The agreed agenda normally allows for District and Lincolnshire councillors to bring any matters to the council

v) The agreed agenda normally allows the local police to bring any update on issues within the village.

vi) The minutes of the last formal meeting are presented for approval ( Stickford councillors normally receive copies of the minutes and new agenda at least 5 days before the meeting ). If approval given, 2 councillors to approve and second the minutes, the chairman signs the minutes as a true record of the last meeting.

vii) The meeting moves to issues raised at the last meeting with the councillors knowing any actions that have been completed and why if any action is outstanding an update is given, these action are carried over on to the actions of this meeting

viii) The Responsible Finance Officer RFO/Clerk then presents a list of outstanding bills to pay to the councillors and if agreed without debate the cheques are signed for the clerk to process in accordance with the statutory financial regulations of the parish. The RFO/Clerk identifies any financial issues to the councillors for discussion and approval or delayed until next meeting.

Once a year normally in December of each year the RFO/Clerk presents the proposed draft precept for the next financial Year which the councillors are requested to approve. See para 3 a above where at an informal discussion meeting normally in the November where the precept is discussed in detail and the draft precept prepared for the December formal meeting

ix) The planning delegate gives an account of all parish and related planning issues with results where appropriate.

x) All other committees must give accounts of issues raised since the last formal meeting, a nil report is required.

xi) All correspondence is presented to all councillors for comment and actions where appropriate

xii) All other issues raised 7 days prior to the meeting are discussed and can be resolved if the councillors agree.

However, no issue raised at the meeting can be resolved unless all councillors agree the action to be taken. All actions and issues that cannot be resolved at the meeting must be carried over to the next formal meeting

11. **After the first business has been completed**, the order of business, unless the Council otherwise decides on the ground of urgency, shall be as follows:- Urgent Business

A motion to vary the order of business on the ground of urgency:

May be proposed by the Chairman or by any member and, if proposed by the Chairman, may be put to the vote without being seconded, and

Shall be put to the vote without discussion.

12. **Resolutions Moved Without Notice**

Resolutions dealing with the following matters may be moved without notice:-

- To appoint a Chairman of the meeting.
- To correct the Minutes.
- To approve the Minutes.
- To alter the order of business.
- To proceed to the next business.
- To close or adjourn the debate.
- To refer a matter to a committee.
- To appoint a committee or any members thereof.
- To adopt a report.
- To amend a motion.
- To give leave to withdraw a resolution or amendment.
- Members will conduct themselves in a reasonable and courteous manner and respect the office of Chairman in accordance with the Councils Code of Conduct.

- To exclude the press and public. (see Order 24 below)
- To silence or eject from the meeting a fellow Councillor named for misconduct.
- To give the consent of the Council where such consent is required by these Standing Orders.
- To suspend any Standing Order. (see Order 35 below)
- To adjourn the meeting.

### 13. **Polite rules to be observed**

- A Councillor shall remain seated when speaking unless requested to stand by the Chairman.
- The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.
- Councillors shall address of the Chairman. If two or more members wish to speak, the Chairman shall decide who to call upon.
- Whenever the Chairman speaks during a debate all other Councillors shall be silent.

### 14. **Disorderly Conduct**

- All Councillors must observe the Code of Conduct which was adopted by the council on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015, a copy of which is with these Standing Orders in a separate file for council conveniences.
- No Councillor shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman, wilfully obstruct business, or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly or in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.
- If, in the opinion of the Chairman, a councillor has broken the provisions of paragraph (b) of this Order, the Chairman shall express that opinion to the Council and thereafter any councillor may move that the councillor named, be no longer heard or that the councillor named, do leave the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion. If a councillor reasonably believes another councillor is in breach of the code of conduct, that councillor is under a duty to report the breach to the East Lindsey District Council Monitoring Officer.
- If either of the motions mentioned in paragraph (c) is disobeyed, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting or take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce them.

### 15. **Code of Conduct on Complaints**

The Council shall deal with complaints of maladministration allegedly committed by the Council or by proper officer or councillors in such manner as adopted by the Council except for those complaints which should be properly directed to the East Lindsey Monitoring Officer for consideration.

The Stickford Code of Conduct is a separate document but must be kept with these standing orders

## **16. Discussions and Resolutions Affecting Employees of the Council**

If at a meeting there arises any question relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service, of any person employed by the Council, it shall not be considered until the Council has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded. (See Standing Order No. 24 & 25).

## **17. Expenditure**

Orders for the payment of money shall be authorised by resolution of the Council and signed by two of the four signatories. In case of emergency, the Clerk and Chairman to authorise specific expenditure. Further details to be submitted for approval at the next Parish Council meeting.

## **18. Committees**

The Council must at its Annual Parish Council Meeting decide if any Committees need forming and may at any other time appoint other committees as are necessary, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf:-

- a) Shall not appoint any member of a committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting.
- b) May at any time dissolve or alter the membership of committee.
- c) All committees shall have and agree Terms of Reference as appendix 1 to these orders where applicable.
- d) The Chairman and Vice-Chairman, ex-officio, shall be voting members of every committee.
- e) members of committees entitled to vote, shall vote by show of hands, or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot. Chairmen of committees shall in the case of an equality of votes have a second or casting vote.

## **19. Accounts and Financial Statement**

- Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this Standing Order or by statute, all accounts for payment and claims upon the Council shall be laid before the Council.
- Where it is necessary to make a payment before it has been authorised by the Council, such payment shall be certified as to its correctness and urgency by the Clerk. Such payment shall be authorised by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Council.
- All payments ratified under sub-paragraph (2) of this Standing Order shall be separately included in the next schedule of payments before the Council.
- The Clerk shall supply to each member as soon as practicable after 31<sup>st</sup> March in each year a statement of the receipts and payments of the Council for the completed financial year. A Financial Statement prepared on the receipts and payments accounting basis for a year to 31 March shall be presented to each member before the end of the month of May, for the purpose of the internal audit. The external audit shall be presented to the appointed auditor during June for formal approval. At the September formal meeting the Clerk shall present to the Councillors the external auditors report.

- Councillors shall be able to claim expenses on all visits outside of the Parish providing the full council approve that the visit is in the interest for the parish and that no decisions can be taken unless authorised by the full council. Each councillor shall give an account of all activity at the next formal meeting.

## 20. **Estimates / Precepts**

The parish council shall prepare a precept for approval and ratification at the formal December each year for the following financial year

This precept is to be prepared by councillors giving estimates of proposed expenses for that year.

The Clerk is to prepare a detailed chart to assist the councillors to estimate costs.

## 21. **Interests**

If a councillor has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 8th December 2015, then he/she shall declare such interest as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the existence and nature of that interest as required.

If a councillor who has declared a personal interest then considers the interest to be prejudicial, he must withdraw from the room during consideration of the item to which the interest relates.

The Clerk may be required to compile and hold a register of member's interests in accordance with agreement reached with the Monitoring Officer of the Responsible Authority and/or as required by statute.

## 22. **Inspection of Documents**

A councillor may for the purpose of his duty as such (but not otherwise), inspect any document in possession of the Council or a committee, shall, on request, be supplied with a copy.

All minutes kept by the Council and by any committee shall be open for the inspection of any member of the Council.

Under the transparency, all documents shall be made available to residents mainly through the parish council web site. Where no access to the web site is available, residents are to contact the clerk in writing or email for such documents, subject to any data protection, private and confidential information and will involve costs with printing.

## 23. **No member Councilor or of any committee shall in the name of, or on behalf of the Council:-**

- Inspect any lands or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
- Issue orders, instructions or directions, unless authorised to do so by the Council or the relevant committee.



**24. Admission of The Public and Press to Meetings**

The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees, which may, however, temporarily exclude the public by means of the following resolutions.

“That in view of the [special] [confidential] nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw”.

The press and public may not be present at council discussion meetings

**25. At all meetings of the Council the Chairman may** at his or her discretion and at a convenient time in the transaction of business, adjourn the meeting so as to allow any members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at that meeting.

**26. The Clerk shall afford to the press reasonable facilities** for the taking of their report of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present. There shall be no audio or video recording or photographs of the meeting without the express approval of the Council.

**27. If a member of the public interrupts** the proceedings at any meeting, the Chairman may, after warning, order that they be removed from the meeting and may adjourn the meeting for such period as is necessary to restore order.

**28. Freedom of information**

All council documents shall be displayed on the parish web site and can be downloaded.

By prior arrangement with the clerk, information will be disclosed if not contravening the Data Protection Act, and a fee payable as agreed @ 20p per page in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

**29. Confidential Business**

- No Councillor or any committee member shall disclose to any person not a Councillor or proper officer any business declared to be confidential by the Council, or the committee as the case may be.
- Any councillor in breach of the provisions of paragraph (1) of this Standing Order shall be removed from any committee of the Council by the Council.

**30. Liaison with District Councillor and Lincolnshire County Councillor and Lincolnshire Police**

An invitation to attend with an agenda for each meeting shall be sent to the District Councillor for the appropriate ward , Lincolnshire County Councillor and Lincolnshire Police for the area covered by Stickford Parish Council.

### 31. Planning Applications

The Clerk/Councillor appointed to receive Planning applications shall refer every planning application received to the full Council at the earliest opportunity.

The appointed councillor will keep a record of all applications and results to the specific time frame as stated by ELDC/LCC .

### 32. Financial Matters

- The Council shall consider and approve Financial Regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer.
- The Financial Regulations of the Council shall be subject to regular review, at least once every two years.
- The Council having considered and approved the Financial Regulations agree that they are kept in a separate folder with these standing orders. Date ref removed was 8<sup>th</sup> Dec 2015
- The council will consider all applications to provide a grant which is covered within the Financial Regulations, which will include submitting annual accounts for the previous financial year.
- All members and Officers are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An officer issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, usually by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any de mini mis provisions in Regulation 11 (I) of the Financial Regulations.
- Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £1,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted, the Clerk shall invite tenders from at least three firms to be taken from the appropriate approved list.
- If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £1,000 or if all the tenders are identical the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
- When it is to enter into a contract less than £1,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph (a) the Clerk shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply); where the value is below £100 and above £50 the Clerk shall strive to obtain 3 estimates. Otherwise, Regulation 10 (3) above shall apply.

- The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender, quote or estimate.
- The reason as to why must be recorded.

33. **Variation, Revocation and Suspension of Standing Orders**

Any or every part of the Standing Orders except those printed in bold type may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

34. **A resolution permanently to add, vary or revoke a Standing Order** shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

35. **Standing Orders to be given to Members**

A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each member by the Clerk upon delivery to him/her of the member's declaration of acceptance of office and written undertaking to observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.

NB. Standing Orders in bold type are compulsory as they are laid down in Acts of Parliament. Those Standing Orders cannot be altered.

Approved by the Council on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025 and duly signed by the Chairman

To be reviewed in January 2026



03/02/2025