

BURITON PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS

AMENDED May 2017

COUNCILLORS

1. Following election or co-option to the Council, each councillor will be issued with a copy of the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council and the Standing orders of the Council and they will sign the form of Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
2. All councillors will observe the Code of Conduct at all times when on Council business and no member will act in such a way that it will bring the Council into disrepute, behave offensively in meetings or obstruct the Council's business.

MEETINGS

3. Meetings of the Parish Council should normally be held on the last Monday of every alternate month (January, March, May, July, September and November) at 7pm in Buriton Village Hall unless the Council resolves otherwise.
4. 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. At the discretion of the Chairman the local District Councillor and / or County Councillor may be invited to take part in items of confidential business.
5. No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three. 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.
6. Notices of each meeting of the Parish Council, giving the time, date and place, will be published at least three clear working days before the meeting takes place and will be placed on suitable notice boards in the parish. The notice will contain an agenda of the subjects to be discussed. An agenda for each meeting shall be sent, together with an invitation to attend and report, to the County and District Councillors representing the parish of Buriton.
7. The Council may only take decisions on items clearly specified on the agenda; if agreed by the Chairman, any urgent items which are not on the agenda may be discussed, but no decision should be made at that meeting.
8. An Open Forum period will be held at some point during each meeting (normally at about 7.45pm) when members of the public are permitted to speak on any topic that is or could be directly related to Council business.
9. 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 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.

10. Subject to there being a quorum present, all issues at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon. Voting shall be by a show of hands or, if at least two members request, by a secret ballot. At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any issue shall be recorded so as to show whether each Councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against the proposal. The Chairman has a casting vote whenever there is an equal vote on any matter.
11. The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors in respect of the entire meeting. If a councillor has a disclosable interest in any matter being considered this should be declared as soon as it becomes apparent. Any such interests shall be recorded in the minutes. If the matter is a pecuniary or prejudicial interest then the councillor may make representations and answer questions but should withdraw from the room while the discussion and vote take place. The Council shall endeavour to follow standard local government rules of debate at all meetings.
12. Minutes of all meetings will be taken by the Clerk or other nominated person in the Clerk's absence. The minutes circulated to councillors will be draft minutes until they are approved by the Council at their next meeting and signed by the person presiding at that meeting. No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy. The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of all councillors present and absent.
13. An Annual Parish Meeting shall take place each year. In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office. In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting can be held on such day in May as the Council may decide. The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting followed by appointments to Committees.
14. The Council normally appoints the following Committee: Planning; sub committee: Village Hall; and the following working groups: Finance & General Purposes; Rights of Way; Recreation & Assets and Playground Fundraising. These working groups act in an advisory capacity, without decision-making powers, making recommendations to the Council although the Planning Committee is authorised to make representations on the Council's behalf between Council meetings. Powers to take other specific decisions can be delegated to Committees by the Council. Decisions would be taken in public with notices published as in Standing Order 6 above. The Council can co-opt persons other than members of the Council to any Committee, sub-committee or working group.
15. Extraordinary meetings of the Council may be convened by the Chairman or by two serving councillors at any time of year.

PROPER OFFICER

16. The Council may appoint a Clerk to the Council and / or other officers to assist it in the performance of its duties. The Clerk will act as the Proper Officer and will carry out responsibilities as detailed in the contract of employment agreed by the Council.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

17. The Council shall appoint a Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) to manage the Council's financial affairs. Unless otherwise agreed by the Council, the Clerk of the Council shall be the Council's RFO.
18. Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's financial regulations, recommended by the Finance & General Purposes Working Group and approved by the Council. Expenditure up to £500 for general maintenance is

delegated to the Finance and General Purposes Working Group. Cheques payments will be prepared by the RFO and signed by two councillors.

19. Village hall expenditure up to £500 for general maintenance and running of the hall is delegated to the Village Hall committee and authorised by email by the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Cheques payments will be signed by two councillors.
20. The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year (and fix the Precept to be levied) at a meeting before the end of January in each year, unless required to do otherwise by the collecting Council, East Hampshire District Council.
21. The Council will monitor financial performance, including comparisons with budget and year-end forecasts, at each meeting of the Council.
22. The Council will fulfil all accounting and audit procedures required by Legislative Regulations including, but not limited to, annual accounts and returns, internal and external audits and VAT returns. All returns will be submitted to the Council for approval.
23. Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £500 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender unless determined otherwise by the Council. The Council is not bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.

OTHER MATTERS

24. The Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and will conform to the requirements allowing public access to appropriate documents. All requests for information held by the Council will be reported to the Council.
25. It is essential that the councillors and Clerk maintain an up to date knowledge of their functions and duties. To this end the council will support necessary agreed training and development.
26. The Council will at all times conduct its affairs in accordance with the relevant legislation and approved Codes of Practice relating to non-discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or other subject as laid down by law.

As revised, in the light of Model Standing Orders advocated by the National Association of Local Councils, July 2013