

**Standing Orders for
Sonning Common Parish Council
Adopted at the Annual Meeting of the
Parish Council held on 14 May 2012
(Minute AMPC12.10)
and amended at the Meeting of the
Parish Council held on 21 October 2013
(Minute 14/069.01)**

Based on the Model Standing Orders published by National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

Signed: (Chairman)

Signed: (Parish Clerk)

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STANDING ORDERS

SONNING COMMON PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council has adopted the National Code of Local Government Conduct, to indicate the standards expected and the manner in which the standing orders should be applied. Some minor adjustments have been made and these are marked.

1 Meetings

Mandatory for full Council meetings



Mandatory for committee meetings



Mandatory for sub-committee meetings



Note different symbol shapes are used to facilitate printing on black and white printers

-  a **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.**
-  b **When calculating the 3 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.**
-   c **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.**
- d Meetings of the Council shall be held at the Village Hall, Sonning Common or at such other place as the Council shall otherwise determine, and commence at 8 p.m. or at such other time as may be determined.
- e Subject to Standing Order 1(c) above and Standing Order 30, members of the public from the Parishes of Sonning Common, Rotherfield Peppard, Kidmore End, Eye & Dunsden, Binfield Heath and Harpsden are permitted to make representations and ask and answer questions during Public Participation Time on any matter within the remit of Sonning Common Parish Council or which affects the Parish.
- f A person shall raise his/her hand when requesting to speak. When given the floor he/she shall remain seated and use a microphone, if available, when speaking. Councillors shall stand to raise points of order whether or not a microphone is available.
- g Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Chairman.
- h Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chairman shall direct the order of speaking.
-   i Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is not permitted without the Council's prior written consent.
-   j In accordance with standing order 1(c) 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.
-  k Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman (if any).
-  l 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.

- 



m Subject to standing order 1 (s) below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.
- 



n 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 his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote. (*See also standing orders 2 (I) and (j) below.*)
- 

o 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 his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda; when it is made the Chair or a person nominated by the chair shall call the names of all the members and after each name the member shall state their vote or whether they have abstained.
- 



p The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent. Apologies of absence are received at the start of business and recorded in the minutes.
- 



q The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors in respect of the entire meeting.
- 



r 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. (*See also standing orders 7 and 8 below.*)
- 

s 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.
- 



t 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.
- u Meetings shall not exceed a period of 2.5 hours. Meetings will not go past 10.30pm unless agreed by all members and employees. If this is not agreed, then a vote will take place. If the majority is not in favour, the meeting and any other business will be adjourned to the next meeting as determined by the Chairman.

2 Ordinary Council meetings

See also standing order 1 above

- (a) At every meeting other than the Annual Meeting the first business shall be the appointment of a chairman, if the chairman and vice-chairman be absent, who shall exercise all the powers and duties of the chairman in relation to the conduct of the meeting.
- (b) After the first business has been completed unless the Council otherwise decides on the ground of urgency, shall be as follows:
 - i) Disclosure of interest by members (and employees) in items on the agenda
 - ii) To receive apologies of absence
 - iii) Public question time
 - iv) To read and consider the Minutes; provided that if a copy has been circulated to each member not later than the day of issue of the summons to attend the meeting, the minutes may be taken as read,
 - v) After consideration, to approve by signature of the Minutes by the presiding Chairman or Chairmen of committees as a correct record,
 - vi) To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done,

- vii) To receive such communications as the presiding chairman may wish to lay before the Council,
 - viii) To answer questions on matters arising from the minutes and from any communications.
 - ix) To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting,
 - x) To receive discuss and consider for adoption reports, minutes and recommendations of Committees, The approval of the accuracy of committee minutes should be presented as in point ii) by the relevant committee members.
 - xi) To receive and consider reports by members and representatives of Joint Committees, Joint Boards or other authorities,
 - xii) To make appointments or fill vacancies, on Committees, Joint Boards, Joint Committees or other authorities,
 - xiii) To authorize the sealing of documents,
 - xiv) To consider motions in the order that they have been notified,
 - xv) Any other business specified in the summons.
- (c) A motion to vary the order of business on the ground of urgency,
- i) may be proposed by the Chairman or any member and if proposed by the Chairman may be put to the vote without being seconded, and,
 - ii) shall be put to the vote without discussion.

2a Annual Meetings

- a 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.
- b 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.
- c If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.
- d 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.
- e The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if any) of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.
- f The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- g The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- h In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- i In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- j To receive apologies for absence.
- k Disclosure of interest by members (and employees) in items on the agenda.
- l An annual meeting shall be held every year in the month of May. In the year of ordinary elections of parish councillors the annual meeting shall be held within 14 days after the day on which the councillors elected to take office. This meeting will set the time and date of the normal council meetings throughout the year.
- m Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman (if any) of the Council at the Annual Meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows.
 - i. In an election year, delivery by councillors of their declarations of acceptance of office
 - ii. To appoint school managers under Section 18 of the Education Act 1944
 - iii. To inspect any deeds and trust instruments in the custody of the Council.
 - iv. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meetings of the Council and to receive and note minutes of and/or to determine recommendations made by committees.
 - v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, employees and other local authorities.

- vi. Review of the terms of references for committees.
- vii. Receipt of nominations to existing committees.
- viii. 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.
- ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations.
- x. Review of arrangements, including any charters, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities.
- xi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back.
- xii. In a year of elections, if a Council's period of eligibility to exercise the power of well being expired the day before the annual meeting, to review and make arrangements to reaffirm eligibility.
- xiii. Confirm the date of review of the insurance cover (renewal date).
- xiv. Review of the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies. If required.
- xv. Establishing or reviewing the Council's complaints procedure. Establishing or reviewing the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998. if required
- xvi. Establishing or reviewing the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media if required.
- xvii. Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council for the year ahead.

3 Proper Officer

- a The Council's Proper Officer shall be either (i) the 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.
- b The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following:
 - i. Upon the Council having first resolved that service of summons on councillors confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda for a meeting by delivery or post at their residences at least 3 clear days before a meeting is not expedient electronically serve on councillors a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council and a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee at least 3 clear days before the meeting provided any such email contains the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer.
 - ii. Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee or a sub- 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 4(a)–(e) below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 5 days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it.
 - iv. Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office, in accordance with standing order [3(b)i] OR [3(b)ii] 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 signed by 2 councillors and witnessed
 - xiv. 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.

- xv. Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xvi. Refer a planning application received by council to the Chairman or in his absence Vice-Chairman (if any) of the Planning Committee within 2 working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting or acknowledge notice of a working quorate (party) if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Planning committee or the Council.
- xvii. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders.

4 Motions requiring written notice

- a In accordance with standing order 3(b)(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 10 clear days before the next meeting. The Clerk shall clearly date the receipt of the motion. All information regarding proposed motions may be viewed by members at the Parish Office
- b 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.
- c Having consulted the Chairman or councillors pursuant to standing order 4 b, above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
- d 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.
- e The Clerk shall insert in the summons for every meeting all notices of motions properly in an order which best fits the business of the meeting unless the member giving such notice has stated in writing that he intends to move his resolution at some later meeting or that he withdraws it.
- f If a motion specified in the summons be not moved, it shall unless postponed by the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.
- g A movement must be seconded to become a resolution.
- h A motion moved on notice and seconded may be resolved at that meeting, referred to a committee or deferred to a later date at the discretion of the Council. (Subject to SO 14d).
- i Matters being dealt with under the 10 o'clock rule (submitted to the clerk by 10am of the day of the meeting) must be of an urgent nature only.
- j Non-urgent motions which members wish to propose should have any background papers attached and circulated with the summons. Or be presented by the members, committees or those with relevant information

5 Motions not requiring written notice

- a 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 absences of councillors.
 - iii To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - iv To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - v To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
 - vi To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
 - vii To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
 - viii To close or adjourn debate.
 - ix To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee.
 - x To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any councillors (including substitutes) thereto.
 - xi To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
 - xii To dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
 - xiii To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee.
 - xiv To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub- committee or

- an employee.
- xv To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
- xvi To authorise legal deeds to be signed by two councillors and witnessed. (See standing orders 14(a) and (b) below).
- xvii To authorise the payment of monies up to £750.00.
- xviii To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
- xix To extend the time limit for speeches.
- xx To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
- xxi To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
- xxii To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders.
- xxiii To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law.
- xxiv To adjourn the meeting.
- xxv To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
- xxvi To answer questions from councillors. (SO 8 d governs this resolution)
- xxvii To consider otherwise than in committee a question affecting an employee of the Council.
- xxviii To invite a member having an interest in the subject matter under debate to remain. (SO 13 governs this resolution)
- b If a motion falls within the terms of reference of a committee or sub-committee or within the delegated powers conferred on an employee, a referral of the same may be made to such committee or sub-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.

6 Rules of debate.

- a No discussion shall take place upon the Minutes except concerning their accuracy. Corrections of the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialled by the Chairman.
- b 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.
- c Subject to standing orders 4(a)–(e) above, a motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- d 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.
- e A Councillor may move amendments to his own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder.
- f 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.
- g A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration. The Chairman will call the vote on amendments first and the original motion last. A rejected amendment does NOT imply an accepted motion.
- h A motion should not deal with more than one subject and where a motion with more than one subject is involved, the Chairman will require the components to be separated and move them one by one. The Chairman may decide to move two or more motions together; however the discussion of each should remain separate.
- i No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.
- j Pursuant to standing order 6(h) above, the number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a councillor, is limited to one.
- k 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. (subject to SO 14 d)

- l No speech shall exceed three minutes except by consent of the Council.
- m 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.
- n Subject to standing orders 6(l) and (m) 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.
- o 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 he considers has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting he is concerned by. A member may rise to make a point of order or a personal explanation. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by him which may have been mis-understood. A member rising for these purposes shall be heard forthwith. The ruling of the chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation is final.
- p With the consent of the seconder and/or of the meeting, a motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the majority consent of the council. A councillor shall not speak upon the said motion or amendment unless permission for the withdrawal of the motion or amendment has been refused.
- q A member when seconding a resolution or amendment may, if he then declares his intention to do so, reserve his speech until a later period of the debate.
- r Subject to standing order 6(o) 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 him to leave the meeting;
 - vi to refer a motion to a committee or sub-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.
- s In respect of standing order 6(r)(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 his 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.
- t When given the floor a member shall remain seated to speak and shall turn on the microphone, if available, before speaking.
- u Members shall address the Chairman. If two or more members raise their hands, the Chairman shall call upon one of them to speak and the others shall be silent. Whenever the Chairman intervenes during a debate all other members shall be silent.

7 Code of conduct

- a All councillors shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b All councillors shall undertake training in the code of conduct within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.
- c If paragraph 12(2) of the code of conduct contained in the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 (SI No.1159) has been adopted by the Council or pursuant to relevant provisions in a statutory code of conduct in force at the time, councillors may exercise the rights contained in standing order 7(d) below only if members of the public are permitted to (i) make representations, (ii) answer questions and (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted.
- d Councillors with a prejudicial interest in relation to any item of business being transacted at a meeting may (i) make representations, (ii) answer questions and (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted but must, thereafter, leave the room or chamber.

8 Questions

- a A councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council provided 4 clear days notice of the question has been given to the Proper Officer.
- b 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.
- c A member may ask the Chairman any question concerning the business of the Council.
- d A member with or without notice may ask the Chairman of a committee any question upon the proceedings if a committee then before the Council if the question is put before the Council's consideration of those proceedings are finished.

9 Minutes

- a If a copy of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting has been circulated to councillors no later than the day of service of the summons to attend the scheduled meeting they shall be taken as read.
- b 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 5(a)(iv) above.
- c Minutes, which have been proposed and seconded by relevant members of the council or committees, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chairman or Chairman of the relevant committee of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate. In the Chairman's absence they are to be signed by the vice-chairman of that committee or the person who presented them.
- d If no members of the committee are there to present the minutes they are to be deferred until the next meeting.
- e If the Chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he 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 his view was not upheld by the majority of the () and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- f 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.
- g The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent.
- h A relevant declaration of interest shall be recorded in the minutes.

10 Disorderly conduct

- a No member shall misconduct himself at a meeting by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chairman, by wilfully obstructing business, or by behaving irregularly, offensively, improperly or in such a manner as to scandalize the Council or bring it into contempt or ridicule.
- b If, in the opinion of the Chairman, there has been a breach of standing order 10(a) above, the Chairman shall express that opinion and thereafter any councillor (including the Chairman) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.
- c If a resolution made in accordance with standing order 10(b) above, is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or he may adjourn the meeting.

11 Rescission of previous resolutions

- a 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 one third of the members of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- b When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to standing order 11(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.
- c This standing order shall not apply to resolutions moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a Committee.

12 Voting on appointments

- a Where more than 2 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 until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

13 Pecuniary Interests

- a If a member has any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, within the meaning of section 94 and 95 of the Local Government Act 1972 (other than an indirect interest described in sub-section 2a thereof or an interest that is remote or insignificant as described in the Local Government Act (Pecuniary Interests) Act 1964) in any contract, proposed contract, or other matter, he shall, while it is under consideration by the Council, withdraw from the meeting unless,
 - i. the disability imposed on him by that section has been removed by the County Council, or
 - ii. the Council invite him to remain, or
 - iii. the Contract, proposed contract or other matter is under consideration as part of the report of a committee and is not itself the subject of debate.
- b The Clerk shall record in a book to be kept for the purpose, particulars of any notice given by any member or any Officer of the Council of a pecuniary interest in a contract, and the book shall be open during reasonable hours of the day for the inspection of any member.
- c If a candidate for any appointment under the Council is to his knowledge related to any member of or the holder of any Office under the Council, he and the person to whom he is related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Clerk. A candidate who fails to do so shall be disqualified for such appointment and if appointed may be dismissed without notice. The Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate committee any such disclosure. Where relationship to a member is disclosed the Standing Orders on interests of members in contracts and other matters shall apply.
- d The Clerk shall make known the purport of this Standing Order to every candidate.

14 Expenditure

- a Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- b The Council's financial regulations shall be reviewed once a year.
- c 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, sub-committee or to an employee.
- d Any motion (which is moved otherwise than in pursuance of a recommendation by the Finance committee or of another committee after recommendation by the Finance committee) and which, if carried, would in the opinion of the Chairman, substantially increase the expenditure upon any service under the management of (or reduce the revenue at the disposal of) any committee, or would involve capital expenditure, shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion, to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, and any committee affected by it shall consider whether it desires to report thereon. (The Finance committee shall report on the financial aspect of the matter).
- e Orders for payment of money shall be signed by two members and authorised by resolution of the Council.
- f It is noted that each Councillor has a statutory right to sign cheques on behalf of the Council.

15 Execution and sealing of legal deeds

See also standing order 5(a)(xvi) above

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution.
- b In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 14(a) above, any two members of the Council, not having an interest in the matter may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law to be issued under seal or for which signatures are needed, subject to the conventions of any code of practice adopted by the Council. A document shall not be signed or sealed on behalf of the Council, unless its signing or sealing has been authorised by a resolution other than as allowed by (SO: 23).and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.

16 Committees

See also standing order 1 above

- a The Council may, at its annual meeting, appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as may be necessary, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf and:
- i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. may permit committees to determine the dates of their meetings;
 - iii. shall appoint and determine the term of office of councillor or non-councillor members of such a committee (unless the appointment of non-councillors is prohibited by law) so as to hold office no later than the next annual meeting;
 - iv. may appoint substitute councillors to a committee whose role is to replace ordinary councillors at a meeting of a committee if ordinary councillors of the committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer 2 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
 - v. may in accordance with standing orders, dissolve a committee at any time.
 - vi. If more councillors than are required are nominated for membership of a committee, the appointments will be decided by ballot. In the event of nominees receiving equal votes, the candidate with the least votes will be removed from the list and the vote retaken.
 - vii. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be ex-officio members of every committee, of which they are not full members with the right to speak, to propose motions and to second but not to vote.
 - viii. Every committee at its first meeting following the Annual General Meeting (i.e. the May meeting) before proceeding to any other business, shall elect a chairman, and may elect a vice-chairman to serve until the next Annual Meeting only. The first meeting, therefore, needs to be conducted by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Council, as clearly at that point there is no Chair to that committee. The previous Chairman may nominate any member, including himself to be Chair, however, he/she has no casting vote in this matter.
 - ix. The chairman of a committee or the chairman of the Council may summon a special meeting of that committee at any time. A special meeting shall also be summoned on the requisition in writing of not less than three of the members of the committee. The summons shall set out the business to be considered at that special meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting. Every committee may appoint sub-committees for the purpose to be specified by the committee, but it shall not delegate its powers to a sub-committee.
 - x. Except where ordered by the Council, in the case of a committee the quorum shall not be less than three members and in the case of a sub-committee the quorum shall not be less than two.
 - xi. The Standing Orders on rules of debate (except those parts relating to standing and to speaking more than once) and the Standing Order on interest of members on contracts and other matters shall apply to committee and subcommittee meetings insofar as they are appropriate.
 - xii. Members of committees and sub committees shall vote by a show of hands. Chairman of committees and sub committees shall in the event of an equality of votes, have a second or casting vote.
 - xiii. A member who has proposed a motion which has been referred to any committee of which he is not a member, shall be entitled to explain his motion to the committee but shall not vote. Any Council member shall unless the Council otherwise orders, be entitled to be present as a spectator at the meetings of any committee or sub-committee of which he is not a member.
 - xiv. The Chairman and Vice chairman and Chairmen of committees shall be full members of the Finance Committee. Other members of the Finance Committee shall have at least one year's tenure as Sonning Common Parish Council Councillors **or** have substantial experience or professional qualifications in the field.
 - xv. A Working Party [Working Quorum] may be formed to decide on consultations which require an urgent response. This is formed by any one third from the full council, however, if the matter relates to an operation normally decided by a committee the quorum is three. With the exception of those ex-officio or with conflicting interests.

17 Sub-committees

See also standing order 1 above

- a Unless there is a Council resolution to the contrary, every committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by resolution of the committee.

18 Extraordinary meetings

See also standing order 1 above

- a The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.
- b If the Chairman of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within 7 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.
- c The Chairman of a committee (or a sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee at any time.
- d If the Chairman of a committee (or a sub-committee) does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by 3 councillors, those 3 councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee (or a sub-committee). The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by 3 councillors.

19 Advisory committees

See also standing order 1 above

- a The Council may appoint advisory committees comprised of a number of councillors and non-councillors.
- b Advisory committees and any sub-committees may consist wholly of persons who are non-councillors.

20 Accounts and Financial Statement

- a Except as provided in (b) of this Standing Order or by statute, all accounts for payment and claims upon the Council shall be laid before the Council.
- b The Finance Committee may approve expenditure up to the value of £750 without recourse to the full council. Cheques for orders approved by the council or committee (governed by SO 25) shall be sent out without delay [See Financial Regulations 6.4). Under Financial Regulation 7.2 the Clerk's Salary must be ratified by the full council. See also Terms of Reference.
- c Where it is necessary to make a payment in respect of an account which has not been laid before the Finance Committee, such payment shall be certified as to its correctness and urgency by the appropriate Officer. Unless it has been otherwise authorised by the Council, payment shall be authorised by the Committee, if any, having charge of the business to which it relates, or by the Chairman or Vice-chairman of the Council.
- d All payments authorised under section (b) of this Standing Order, or made without authority of the Council under any statute, shall be separately included in the next schedule of payments laid before the Council.
- e 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.
- f The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments for the each quarter and the balances held at the end of a quarter. This statement should include a comparison with the budget for the financial year. A Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March shall be presented to each councillor before the end of the following month of May. 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.
- g The Clerk shall supply to each member at the ordinary meeting next after the end of the financial year a statement of receipts and payments.

21 Estimates/precepts

- a The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of January.
- b Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Proper Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than December.

22 Canvassing of and recommendations by Councillors

- a Canvassing councillors or the members of a committee or sub-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.
- b A councillor or a member of a committee or sub-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.
- c This standing order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.
- d No councillor shall undertake paid work for the council

23 Inspection of documents

- a Subject to standing orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a councillor may, for the purpose of his official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee or a sub-committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its committees or sub-committees shall be available for inspection by councillors during reasonable hours of the day.
- b All correspondence and other documents of whatever type, dealing with Council business, to be passed to the Clerk without delay. This applies to documents addressed to individual councillors, but which should have been sent direct to the Clerk. The Clerk to arrange for receipt to be recorded, acknowledged and as necessary for a reply to be sent. The Clerk to arrange for documents to be circulated, copied or filed for safe keeping. As necessary the Clerk to arrange the Agenda of Council or committees to permit report of receipt of documents or resolutions authorising signature or other actions. In the absence of the clerk the Chairman to arrange for a Councillor or other person to undertake the Clerk's duties.

24 Unauthorised activities

- a Unless authorised by a resolution of the council or of a committee, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee:
 - a inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - b issue orders, instructions or directions.
- b No member of the Council or of any committee shall issue any orders on behalf of the Council or shall issue any orders in respect of anything being done for the Council unless authorised by the Council or by a committee.

25 Issuing Orders

- a Contracts for over £2,000 must be referred to the full council for consideration, as per Terms of Reference.
- b Committees should normally obtain more than one estimate for expenditure over £2,000. Where the budget is likely to be exceeded committees shall refer to the Finance Committee for decision by the Council.
- c The Clerk is authorised to incur expenditure up to £750.0 on any component of the budget provided that he or she is satisfied that it represents value for money.
- d In the case of a matter which will not wait for the committee to meet, a decision on the action may be taken by the Chairman of the Council (in his absence, the Vice-chairman) consulting the Chairman of the respective committee if available.

26 Confidential business

- a Councillors [Wales: and employees] shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware is of a confidential nature.
- b A councillor in breach of the provisions of standing order 24(a) above may be removed from a committee or a sub-committee by a resolution of the Council.
- c All reports and other documents and all proceedings of committees shall be treated as confidential unless and until they become public in the ordinary course of the Council business.

27 Power of well-being (England)

- a Before exercising the power to promote well-being, a meeting of the full Council shall have passed a resolution to confirm it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria required to qualify as an eligible parish council.
- b The Council's period of eligibility begins on the date that the resolution under standing order 25 (a) above was made and expires on the day before the annual meeting of the Council that takes place in a year of ordinary elections.
- c After the expiry of its preceding period of eligibility, the Council continues to be an eligible council solely for the purpose of completing any activity undertaken in the exercise of the power to promote well-being which was not completed before the expiry of the Council's preceding period of eligibility referred to in standing order 25(b) above.

28 Matters affecting council employees

- a If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the Council OR the delegated committee has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to standing order 1(c) above.
- b The Chairman of the council or delegated committee or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and/or appraisal of [the employee's job title] and shall keep a written record of it. In the case of the proper officer a quorate of councillors shall also give their view of the employees performance which will form the basis of any motion regarding the employment or conduct of this officer . The review and/or appraisal shall be reported back and shall be subject to approval by resolution by the council or delegated committee.
- c 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 [or Chairman of the delegated committee] or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman [as above] in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the council or delegated committee.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance and disciplinary matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by [the employee's job title] relates to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the council this shall be communicated to another two members of the council . Any subsequent action follows the formal grievance procedure.
- e 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.
- f 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.
- g 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.
- h Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to employee records referred to in standing orders 28(g) and (h) above if so justified.
- i Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 28(g) and (h) above shall be provided only to (post holder) and/or the Chairman of the Council, or nominated Councillor

29 Freedom of Information Act 2000

- a 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.
- b Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman. The council 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 3(b)(x) above.

30 Public Question Time

- a. The period of time allocated to Public Participation is at the Chairman's discretion but shall not exceed 15 minutes.
- b. The Chairman may use discretion about the length of time allowed for one person to speak and whether a person is allowed to ask multiple questions.
- c. Questions and contributions do not have to be received by the Council where the issue they concern has been the subject of a decision of the Council in the previous six months. The Chairman will acknowledge and use discretion.
- d. No discussion shall take place on any question put or contribution made.
- e. The Chairman may authorise a councillor to respond to questions or contributions made. Any further responses are at the Chairman's discretion. The Chairman may decide that any response shall be made in writing, and will make clear that this is the case.
- f. In the interests of good record keeping, the Chairman can decide to bring forward any item on the agenda to be discussed by the Council which refers to a question or contribution made during the Public Participation Time, when the response forms a substantial part of the scheduled business.
- g. The Chairman may invite participation from an individual member of the public during debates of the Council.
- h. No resolution at a meeting shall be based solely on the representations made in the Public Participation Time.
- i. The minutes of the meeting may include the names and residence of members of the public speaking in the Public Participation Time and a very brief indication of the nature of the issue(s) raised.
- j. 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.
- k. Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business

31 Relations with the press/media

- a. 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.
- b. (See Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960). The public and the press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees, which may however, temporarily exclude the public or the press or both by means of the following resolution:-
"That in view of the (special) or (confidential) nature of the business about to be transacted, it is in the opinion of this Council advisable in the public interest that the — (press) (public press) (public) be temporarily excluded and that they are instructed to withdraw"
- c. The Clerk shall afford to the press reasonable facilities for taking their report of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chairman may, after warning, order that he be removed from the Council Chamber, or that the part of the chamber open to the public be cleared.
- d. 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.

32 Personal Opinion

- a No member of the Council or of any committee shall, when meeting or corresponding with any official or member of any Council or authority with which the parish council may at any time have dealings, give any indication of his or her personal opinion in any matter regarding the Parish of Sonning Common which may be construed as being official policy of the Parish Council. When in contact with such officials and/or members, only the official policy of this parish may be propounded.
- b Unless a Councillor has been authorised by the council to speak to the media on a particular issue, Councillors who comment to the media, or are asked to do so by the media, will make it clear that it is a personal view and ask that it be clearly reported as such. Unless what is being reported has been included in ratified minutes of the Council or its committees (notwithstanding issues which by Standing Order are to be referred to the full council), he/she must make it clear to members of the public that he/she is expressing a personal view.

33 Liaison with District and County or Unitary Councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillor of the District and County or Unitary Council [in Wales: County Borough and County Council] representing its electoral ward.
- b Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter sent to the District or County or Unitary Council [in Wales: County Borough and County Council] shall be sent to the District or County or Unitary Council [in Wales: County Borough and County Council] councillor representing its electoral ward.

34 Financial matters

- a Reference to SO 24 (above)
 - i. the accounting records and systems of internal control will be reviewed once during the course of the year and recorded.
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council will be reviewed in March every year.
 - iii. the receipt of a report from the Internal Auditor shall be required annually;
 - iv. Councillors and local electors may request to inspect the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments;
 - v. Procurement policies shall be reviewed annually by the Council by their inclusion in the SO's and Terms of reference. A Committee may recommend a change in these procedures for discussion by the full Council at any time. (subject to standing order 30(b) below) including the setting of values for different procedures where the contract has an estimated value of less than £60,000.
- b Any 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 34(c) below.
- c Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:
 - i. a public notice of intention to place a contract to be placed in a local newspaper;
 - ii. a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - iii. tenders are to be sent, in a sealed marked envelope, to the Proper Officer by a stated date and time;
 - iv. 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;
 - v. tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of Council or Committee.
- d Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.

- e 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.

35 Allegations of breaches of the code of conduct

- a On receipt of a notification that there has been an alleged breach of the code of conduct the Proper Officer shall refer it to a committee known as the Standards Committee.
- b Where the notification relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of that fact, who, upon receipt of such notification, shall nominate a person to assume the duties of the Proper Officer set out in the remainder of this standing order, who shall continue to act in respect of that matter as such until the complaint is resolved.
- c Where a notification relates to a complaint made by an employee (not being the Proper Officer) the Proper Officer shall ensure that the employee in question does not deal with any aspect of the complaint.
- d The subject matter of notifications shall be confidential and, insofar as it is possible to do so by law, the Council (including the Proper Officer and the Chairman or Vice Chairman shall take the steps set out below, together with other steps considered necessary, to maintain confidentiality.
- e Standing order 31(d) above should not be taken to prohibit the Council (whether through the Proper Officer or the Chairman or Vice Chairman from disclosing information to members and officers of the Council or to other persons where such disclosure is necessary to deal with the complaint or is required by law.
- f The Chairman or Vice Chairman shall have the power to:
 - i. seek documentary and other evidence requested by the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
 - ii. grant the member involved a financial indemnity in respect of legal costs, which shall be in accordance with the law and subject to approval by a meeting of the full Council.

36 Variation, revocation and suspension of standing orders

- a 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.
- b A motion to permanently add to or to vary or to revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders not mandatory by law shall not be carried unless two-thirds of the councillors at a meeting of the Council vote in favour of the same.

37 Standing orders to be given to councillors

- a The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor upon delivery of his declaration of acceptance of office.
- b The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.
- c A councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than three times in one meeting may result in him being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.

END OF STANDING ORDERS. CODE OF CONDUCT FOLLOWS.

Annex A NATIONAL CODE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONDUCT

This code is a guide for all Councillors elected or co-opted to local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland. It supplements both the law enacted by Parliament and the Standing Orders made by individual councils. It has been agreed by the Association representing local authorities in all three countries and by the Government.

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1. LAW, STANDING ORDERS AND NATIONAL CODE

Make sure that you fully understand the rules of conduct which the law, Standing Orders and the national code require you to follow. It is your personal responsibility to apply their requirements on every relevant occasion. Seek any advice about them that you need from your council's appropriate senior officer or from your own legal adviser.

2. PUBLIC DUTY AND PRIVATE INTEREST

- (i) Your over-riding duty as a Councillor is to the whole local community
- (ii) You have a special duty to your own constituents, including those who did not vote for you.
- (iii) Whenever you have a private or personal interest in any question which councillors have to decide, you must not do anything to let that interest influence the decision,
- (iv) Do nothing as a Councillor which you could not justify to the public,
- (v) The reputation of your council, and of your party if you belong to one, depends on your conduct and what the public believes about your conduct,
- (vi) It is not enough to avoid actual impropriety: you should at all times avoid any occasion for suspicion or the appearance of improper conduct

3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

- (i) The law makes specific provision requiring you to disclose pecuniary interests, direct and indirect. But interests which are not pecuniary can be just as important. Kinship, friendship, membership of an association, society or trade union, trusteeship and many other kinds of relationship can sometimes influence your judgment and give the impression that you might be acting for personal motives. A good test is to ask yourself whether others would think that the interest is of a kind to make this possible. If you think they would, or if you are in doubt, disclose the interest and withdraw from the meeting unless under Standing Orders you are specifically invited to stay.
- (ii) The principles about disclosures of interest should be borne in mind in your unofficial relations with other councillors - at party group meetings, or other informal occasions no less scrupulously than at formal meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees.

4. MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRMANSHIP OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- (i) You, or some firm or body with which you are personally connected, may have professional business or personal interests within the area for which the council is responsible; such interests may be substantial and closely related to the work of one or more of the Council's committees or sub-committees, concerned with (say) planning or developing land, council housing, personnel matters or the letting of contracts for supplies, services or works.
- (ii) Before seeking or accepting membership of any such committee or sub-committee, you should seriously consider whether your membership would involve you
 - (a) in disclosing an interest so often that you would be of little value to the committee or sub-committee, or:
 - (b) in weakening public confidence in the impartiality of the committee or sub-committee.
- (iii) You should not seek or accept the chairmanship of a committee or sub-committee whose business is closely related to a substantial interest or range of interests of yourself or of any body with which you are associated.

5 COUNCILLORS AND OFFICERS

- (i) Both councillors and officers are servants of the public, and they are indispensable to one another. But their responsibilities are distinct. Councillors are responsible to the electorate and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. Officers are responsible to the Council and are permanently appointed. An officer's job is to give advice to councillors and the Council, and to carry out the council's work under the direction and control of the Council and its committees.
- (ii) Mutual respect between councillors and officers is essential to good local government. Close personal familiarity between individual Councillor and officer can damage this relationship and prove embarrassing to other councillors and officers.
- (iii) If you are called upon to take part in appointing an officer, the only question you should consider is which candidate would best serve the whole Council. You should not let your personal or political preferences influence your judgment. You should not canvass the support of colleagues for any candidate and you should resist any attempt by others to canvass yours.

6 USE OF CONFIDENTIAL AND PRIVATE INFORMATION

As a Councillor you necessarily acquire much information that has not yet been made public and is still confidential. It is a grave betrayal of trust to use confidential information for the personal advantage of yourself or of anyone known to you.

7 GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

Treat with extreme caution any offer of gift, favour or hospitality that is made to you personally. The person or organization making the offer may be doing or seeking to do business with the Council, or may be applying to the Council for planning permission or some other kind of decision. Working lunches and other social occasions arranged or authorised by the Council or by one of its committees or subcommittees may be a proper way of doing business, provided that no extravagance is involved. Nor can there be any hard and fast rule about acceptance or refusal of tokens of goodwill on special occasions. But you are personally responsible for all such decisions and for avoiding the risk of damage to public confidence in local government. The receipt or offer of gifts should be reported to the chief executive.

8 EXPENSES AND ALLOWANCES

There are rules entitling you to claim expenses and allowances in connection with your duties as a Councillor. Those rules should be scrupulously observed.

9 USE OF COUNCIL FACILITIES

Make sure that any facilities - such as transport, stationery or secretarial services - provided by the Council for your use in your duties as a Councillor are used strictly for those duties and for no other purpose.

END