

# ***BINEGAR PARISH COUNCIL***

## Standing Orders

### **1. Introduction**

Standing orders and policies govern the running of the Council. These standing orders concern meetings and decisions. There are separate *Financial Standing Orders* and a *Code of Conduct* for councillors. In addition, there are policies and procedures that are available to see on the Council's website.

### **2. Ordinary meetings**

- 2.1 The Council meets on the first Tuesday of each month except August and January.
- 2.2 We put agendas on our website and notice boards at least three working days before the meeting day.
- 2.3 We welcome the public to attend and parishioners may speak at the Chair's discretion,
- 2.4 No business may take place unless at least three councillors are present.
- 2.5 The Chair (or Vice Chair) presides at meetings. In their absence, councillors choose who will preside.
- 2.6 We will provide reasonable facilities for the press when required.
- 2.7 We allow filming, photographing or audio recording of our meetings.
- 2.8 We take decisions by voting on a motion proposed by one councillor and seconded by another.
- 2.9 We vote by show of hands. If voting is equal, the Chair may use a second, casting vote.
- 2.10 A successful motion then becomes a resolution of the Council.
- 2.11 A councillor wishing to record the names of those voting each way must request this before the vote.
- 2.12 We may not reverse a resolution for 6 months other than by a special motion from three councillors.
- 2.13 After a vote on a special motion, no similar motion may come forward for a further 6 months.
- 2.14 Meetings will not last more than two hours.
- 2.15 The Chair's decision about standing orders at meetings is final.

### **3. Confidential business**

- 3.1 Some items of business, for example a staff or commercial matter, may be confidential.
- 3.2 On these occasions, we will ask the public to leave the meeting.
- 3.3 Excluding the public from an item may only be by resolution with the reason recorded in the minutes.
- 3.4 Councillors must not disclose information given in confidence or that they should know is confidential.

### **4. Annual meeting**

- 4.1 Our annual meeting is in May. The first business is to elect a Chair and Vice Chair for the year.
- 4.2 The Chair and Vice Chair must then sign their acceptance of office forms.
- 4.3 In an election year, councillors must sign their acceptance of office forms.
- 4.4 The Council may also arrange insurance, policy or other reviews.

### **5. Minutes**

- 5.1 The Clerk prepares minutes to record each meeting and lists those councillors present.
- 5.2 Before any discussion on them, we must confirm draft minutes for accuracy and sign them.
- 5.3 We post confirmed minutes on our website and notice boards within a week of each meeting.

## **6. Committees**

6.1 We may appoint committees as necessary. They may include parishioners who are not councillors.

## **7. Extraordinary meetings**

7.1 The Chair may convene an extraordinary meeting at any time, giving appropriate public notice.

7.2 Two councillors may demand that the Chair calls an extraordinary meeting.

7.3 If the Chair fails to do so within 7 days, the two councillors may convene the meeting.

7.4 The two councillors must sign the statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda.

## **8. Proper Officer**

8.1 The Proper Officer advises on and carries out all the Council's functions required by law.

8.2 Our Proper Officer is the Clerk or, in the absence of the Clerk, an appointed councillor.

8.3 The responsibilities and duties of the Proper Officer are set out in the Clerk's job description.

8.4 We have a set of policies that cover staff employment.

## **9. Code of conduct**

9.1 The Council expects its councillors to follow the Members' Code of Conduct.

9.2 They must display selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

9.3 The Code specifies when a councillor must declare an interest in an agenda item.

9.4 We will arrange training in the code of conduct for new councillors within 6 months of their election.

## **10. Disorderly conduct**

10.1 We are zero tolerant of offensive/improper behaviour or obstruction of our business at a meeting.

10.2 Any councillor may move to silence/exclude a person. If seconded, we vote without more discussion.

10.3 If the person disobeys the resolution, the Chair may take reasonable steps to enforce it.

## **11. Signing, sealing and executing legal documents**

11.1 We may only authorise signature and execution of a legal document by a resolution.

11.2 Any two councillors may sign the document and the Proper Officer must witness their signatures.

## **12. Suspending Standing Orders**

12.1 We may resolve to suspend Standing Orders in relation to any specific item of business.

Adopted July 2016

Reviewed and reaffirmed May 2019