



## **Slip End Parish Council**

### **Standing Orders**

#### **1. Meetings**

- a) Meetings of the Council shall be held as and when the Council may direct.
- b) Full Council meetings should last for no longer than 3 hours and should be kept to 2 hours wherever practicable. Working Group and committee meetings should last as long, as is reasonably necessary to complete their business. Any business not concluded shall be carried over to the next meeting or delegated as appropriate and agreed.

##### **1.2 The Statutory Annual Meeting**

- a) In an election year the Annual Parish Meeting shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office and
- b) In a year which is not an election year the Annual Parish Meeting shall be held on the second Monday in May followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

1.3. In addition to the Statutory Annual Parish Meeting at least three other statutory meetings shall be held in each year. This will normally be on the First Monday in the Month unless this conflicts with a public holiday.

1.4. Chairman of the Meeting - The person presiding at a meeting may exercise all the powers of the Chairman in relation to the conduct of the meeting.

1.5. Quorum of the Council - Three members shall constitute a quorum at full meetings of the council. Without a Quorum no official council business may be transacted.

#### **2. Voting**

Members shall vote by show of hands or, if at least three members so request, by signed ballot. If two members so require, the Clerk shall record the names of the members who voted on any question to show whether they voted for or against it. Such a request must be made before moving on to the next business.

2.1.

- a) Subject to (b) and (c) below 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 they gave an original vote.

b) If the person presiding at the annual meeting 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.

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

### **3. Order of Business**

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

a) To elect a Chairman of the Council.

b) To receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.

c) In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.

d) To decide when any declarations of acceptance of office and written undertakings to observe the code of conduct adopted by the council which have not been received as provided by law, shall be received.

e) To elect a Vice Chairman of the Council.

f) To appoint representatives to outside bodies.

3.1 At every meeting other than the Annual Parish Meeting the first business shall be to appoint a Chairman if the Chairman and Vice Chairman be absent and to receive such declarations of acceptance of office (if any) and undertaking to observe the Councils code of conduct as are required by law to be made or, if not then received, to decide when they shall be received.

3.2 The Council shall review the pay and conditions of service of existing employees once a year.

3.3 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:

a) To receive apologies for absence. Councillors to give apologies direct to clerk prior to meeting.

b) To receive declarations of interest

c) To make the meeting open to the public for comments on agenda items only. Any members of the public may speak on any agenda item at this point, for 3 minutes, subject to an overall time of 15 for all comments. If more than one person wishes to speak on the same subject, a speaker may be nominated to represent the comments of a group (or two speakers, one for and one against). No debate is to be undertaken at this point in the meeting.

At the end of the meeting, members of the public may speak on any point arising from the meeting or to raise a new point for 3 minutes, subject to an overall time of 15 minutes.

d) After consideration to approve the signature of the Minutes by the person presiding as a correct record.

e) To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.

f) To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.

g) To allow the Chairman to raise any relevant issues before the Council.

- h) To engage in reasonable debate on subjects which are previously lodged as agenda items.
- i) If necessary, to authorise the signing of orders for payment.

## **4. Rules of Debate**

- a) No discussion shall take place upon the Minutes except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialled by the Chairman.
- b) No speech shall exceed 3 minutes except by prior consent of the Chairman
- c) Members shall direct all speeches to the question under discussion or to a question of order and must never engage in personal attacks on others
- d) If an amendment be carried, the resolution, as amended, shall take the place of the original resolution, and shall become the resolution upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- e) The mover of a resolution or of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 2 minutes. A member exercising a right of reply shall not introduce a new matter. After the right of reply has been exercised or waived, a vote shall be taken without further discussion.
- f) All opinions and views to be presented in a reasoned and respectful manner, and always through the Chair
- g) All debates to lead, where possible, to agreed action
- h) At the Chairman's discretion, any member may ask the Chairman or the Clerk any question concerning the business of the Council,
- i) The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.
- j) Members shall address the Chairman. If two or more members wish to speak, the Chairman shall decide whom to call upon.
- k) Whenever any member speaks during a debate all other members shall be silent.

## **5. Disorderly Conduct**

- a) All members must observe the Code of Conduct, which was adopted by the Council on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2012, and reviewed annually, a copy of which is annexed to these Standing Orders.
- b) No member shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman, wilfully obstruct business, make personal or offensive comments, behave irregularly, or in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.
- c) If a member has acted in a manner contrary to that required, any member may move that the member named be silenced or ejected from the meeting and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion. If a member reasonably believes another member is in breach of the code of conduct, that member is under a duty to report the breach to the Standards Board.
- d) If the motion mentioned in paragraph (c) is disobeyed, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting or take such further steps as may be reasonably necessary to enforce them.

## **6. Expenditure**

Orders for the payment of money shall be authorised by resolution of the Council and signed by two members.

The Clerk is authorised to commission work for minor repairs up to the limit of £300.00 and for stationery up to £100.00 in consultation with the Chair or member responsible for finance, before seeking full council approval.

## **7. Working Groups and Committees**

- a) The Council may at its Annual Parish Council Meeting and at any other time, appoint Working Groups and Committees as are necessary.
- b) The Chairman may attend any working group or committee.
- c) The Council may appoint persons other than members of the Council to any Working Group or Committee, and
- d) May at any time dissolve or alter the membership of a Working Group or Committee.
- e) Chairman of committees and sub-committees shall in the case of an equality of votes have a second or casting vote.

## **8. Interests**

- a) If a member has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2012 and reviewed annually then he shall declare such interest as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the existence and nature of that interest as required.
- b) If a member who has declared a personal interest then considers the interest to be prejudicial (for pecuniary reasons or otherwise), he must withdraw from the room or chamber during consideration of the item to which the interest relates.
- c) The Clerk may be required to compile and hold a Register of Members interests or a copy thereof, in accordance with agreement reached with the Monitoring Officer of the Responsible Authority and/or as required by statute.

## **9. Authority & Jurisdiction**

- a) All minutes and any other records and documents kept by the Council shall be open for the inspection of any member of the Council.

### **b) Unauthorised Activities**

No member of the Council 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, opinions or directions unless authorised to do so by the Council.

### **c) Admission of the Public and Press to Meetings**

We welcome and value contributions from the public and will encourage attendance at meetings. In order, to control, but not restrict contributions from our residents, we will invite all comments to be made through the chair.

The filming, sound recording and electronic transmission of Slip End Parish Council meetings are allowed, provided that Members are made aware of such recording taking place at the time via the Chair.

The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees who may, however, temporarily exclude them by means of the following resolutions:  
 'That in the view of the [special or 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.'

d) At all meetings of the Council, the Chairman may at his 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.

e) 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.

#### f) Confidential Business

- 1) No member of the Council or of any Working Group or committee shall disclose to any person not a member of the Council, any business declared to be confidential.
- 2) Any member in breach of the provisions of paragraph (1) of this Standing Order shall be removed from any Working Group or Committee

#### g) Liaison with Central Bedfordshire Councillors

A Summons and Agenda for each meeting shall be sent, together with an invitation to attend, to the Central Bedfordshire Councillors for the appropriate ward.

#### h) Planning Applications

The Clerk shall file electronically all Planning Applications as soon as it is received, keeping the following particulars notified to the Council:

- a) The date on which it was received
- b) The name of the applicant
- c) The place to which it relates
- d) The planning authority's unique reference number

## **10. Financial Matters**

a) Wherever possible, more than one estimate will be sought for any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and execution of works. All works with an estimated value in excess of £10,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender. The Council or a committee, is not bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote

b) The Financial Regulations of the Council shall be subject to regular review, at least once every four years.

## **11. Dealing with Reported Accidents**

Members and the Clerk should carefully record all accidents reported to them.

The following should be recorded;

- Name of Complainant
- Address
- Telephone Number
- The name of the person injured
- Their Address
- Their telephone number
- Nature of the accident
- Nature of the injury
- Date it occurred.

The complainant should also be asked to report the accident to the Clerk, as there may be additional information needed.

The Member should also report the accident to the Clerk, as the complainant may not readily do so themselves.

The Clerk should record all accidents in the Accident Book and inform our insurance company in case of a future claim against us.

## **12. Policies**

### Data Protection

Slip End Parish Council adheres to all current Data Protection legislation and is registered with the ICO.

Our Data Protection policy can be found on our website: [www.slipendparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.slipendparishcouncil.co.uk).

Members and the Clerk are required to work within current legislation, our DP policy and the latest advice to Members issued by the Clerk.

### Complaints Procedure

Our Complaints Procedure can be found on our website at [www.slipendparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.slipendparishcouncil.co.uk)

### Press and Media Policy

Our Press and Media Policy can be found on our website at [www.slipendparishcouncil.co.uk](http://www.slipendparishcouncil.co.uk)

## **13. Miscellaneous**

### 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. A resolution permanently to add, vary or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded, be passed, and come into force with immediate effect.

***The Council having previously been circulated by the Clerk, reviewed these Standing Orders on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024.***

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Mrs T O'Neill - Clerk / RFO to the Council

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Mrs S Minnighan - Chair of the Council