

GREETHAM PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

Approved on 10th October 2018

Information on revisions

| Date | Revision |
|-------------|--|
| 14 May 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Deleted “To answer questions from councilors” from SO 5 |
| 23 Sep 2014 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Standing Order 1 o) prohibiting recording meetings etc deleted due to change of law. |
| 1/1/2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Standing Order 1 a) Time of meetings amended to 7.30pmLast bullet in SO 5 deleted as redundant.Appendix 4 Correspondence expanded to include FacebookSO 13 refers to Focus Groups and Appendix 6 Focus Groups addedRutland County Council Code of Conduct adopted in its entirety. Appendix 1 Code of Conduct updated to reflect this and SO 7 b), c), d) deleted. |
| 28/4/2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Standing Order 16 replaced with new text and Appendix 5 rewritten. Appendix 7 – Cooption process added |
| 22/11/2017 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Change of meeting date SO 1 a) and amendment to order of business at AGM SO 2 I) to reflect current practice.Transparency code appendix added.Appendix 6 Focus Groups minor update |
| 10/10/2018 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Meeting date changed back to second WednesdayRe write of Appendix 6 Focus Group. Requirements for public members expanded |

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1. MEETINGS

- a) The Council will meet on the second Wednesday of every month at 7.30 pm, unless circumstances dictate otherwise.
- b) Meetings should normally not exceed 2 hours.
- c) **Mandatory¹ for Full Council:** 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.
- d) **Mandatory all meetings:** When calculating the 3 clear days of 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 Easter break or of a bank holiday shall not count.
- e) **Mandatory all meetings:** 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 the meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.
- f) Subject to Standing Order 1.e above, members of the public are permitted to make representations, ask questions. They may give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda subject. This will take place immediately before the start of the formal meeting.
- g) The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with Standing Order 1.f above shall not exceed 15 minutes.
- h) Subject to Standing Order 1.g above each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemized on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
- i) In accordance with Standing Order 1.e above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate.
- j) In accordance with Standing Order 1.i above, the Chairman may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to the Clerk for a written or oral response.

¹ i.e required by law

- k) A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- l) A Member shall raise his hand when requesting to speak.
- m) Any person speaking at a meeting shall address the comments to the Chairman.
- n) 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.
- o) **Mandatory:** Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorized or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman.
- p) **Mandatory:** 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.
- q) **Mandatory all meetings:** Subject to standing order 1.r below, all motions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the eligible Councillors present and voting thereon.
- r) **Mandatory all meetings:** 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.
- s) **Mandatory:** Voting on any motion shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a Councillor, voting on any motion shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that motion. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item on the agenda.
- t) **Mandatory all meetings:** The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent.
- u) **Mandatory all meetings:** The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors in respect of the whole meeting.
- v) **Mandatory all meetings;** 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.

- w) **Mandatory:** 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.
- x) **Mandatory all meetings:** 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.

2. 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 new councillors elected take office.
- b) In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such a 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 7.00 pm.
- d) The election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.
- e) 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 annual meeting. The Chairman can be re-elected.
- f) The Vice Chairman of the Council, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting.
- g) 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 new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of equality of votes.
- h) In an election year, if the current (non-elected) Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until he is re-elected as Chairman of the Council or a new Chairman has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must give his casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

i) Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows:

- Approval of the minutes of the AGM held the previous year.
- Matters arising
- Review of all Standing Orders
- Review of Asset Register
- Review of insurance
- Review of Council's membership of other bodies
- Election of Councillors to Community Centre Committee
- Election of Tree Warden
- Election of Neighborhood Plan minder
- Election of Burial Ground Committee
- Review of Bank Signatories
- Election of Quarterly Account Auditor (with Clerk)
- 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 the Clerk.

b) The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following:

- Sign and serve on councillors at their residence summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council and the meeting of a committee at least 3 clear working days before the meeting².

² i.e. the preceding Friday for Wednesday meeting.

- Alternatively if agreed electronically serve the equivalent detail at least 3 clear working days before the meeting provided any such email is from the Clerk or the Chairman of the Council or alternatively if a committee the Chairman of the Committee.
- Give public notice of the time, date venue and agenda at least 3 clear working days before a meeting of the Council. A meeting of a committee can be additionally published by the Chairman of the committee. The public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors must be signed by them.
- Subject to Standing Orders 4.a to below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 10 days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it.
- 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
- Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.
- Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office of councillors.
- Retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
- Keep proper records required before and after meetings.
- Process all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 200 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the Council's procedures relating to the same.
- Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.
- Manage the organization, storage of and access to the information held by the Council in paper and electronic form.

- Arrange for the prompt authorization, approval and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- Record every planning application received by the Council within 2 working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

4. MOTIONS REQUIRING WRITTEN NOTICE

- a) In accordance with Standing Order 3 b) above, no motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda.
- b) A member may propose a specific motion in writing to the Council's Clerk at least 14 days before the next meeting.
- c) The Clerk may, before including a motion in the agenda received in accordance with Standing Order 4.a above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording.
- d) If the Clerk considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits in writing to the Clerk in clear and certain language at least 10 clear days before the meeting.
- e) If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Clerk shall consult the Chairman of the forthcoming meeting to consider whether the motion shall be included or rejected in the agenda.
- f) Having consulted the Chairman pursuant to Standing Order 4.d above, the decision of the Clerk as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda is final.
- g) Notice of every motion received in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be numbered in the order received and shall be entered in a book, which shall be open to inspection by all.
- h) Every motion rejected in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be duly recorded with a note in the same book by the Clerk giving reasons for its rejection.
- i) 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.

5. MOTIONS NOT REQUIRING WRITTEN NOTICE

a) Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice:

- To appoint a person to preside at a meeting
- To approve the absences of councillors
- To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting
- To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting
- To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting
- To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience
- To proceed to the next item of business
- To close or adjourn debate
- To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to the Clerk
- To appoint a committee or any councillors thereto
- To receive nominations to a committee
- To dissolve a committee
- To note the minutes of a committee
- To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or the Clerk
- To consider a report and/or recommendations from the Clerk, professional adviser, expert or consultant
- To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it
- To extend the time limit for speeches
- To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting

- To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct
- To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders
- To suspend any standing order except those mandatory by law
- To adjourn the meeting
- To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back

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| Last Bullet point deleted |
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6. RULES OF DEBATE

- a) 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 discretion for reasons of expedience.
- b) Subject to Standing Orders 4.a to 4.e above, a motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- c) Subject to standing order 3.b above , a motion included in an agenda not moved by the councillor who tabled it, may be treated as withdrawn.
- 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 an 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 one of the following:
 - To leave out words
 - To add words
 - 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.

- h) Only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time. The order of which shall be directed by the Chairman. No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.
- i) Subject to Standing Order 6.h above , one or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.
- j) Pursuant to standing order 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 not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairman.
- l) 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.
- m) The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 2 minutes.
- n) Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply in the respect of the substantive motion at the very end of the debate and immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o) Subject to Standing Order 6.m and 6.n 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.
- p) 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 by which he is concerned.
- q) A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman and his decision shall be final.
- r) With the consent of the seconder and/or of the meeting, a motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer. A councillor shall not speak upon the said motion or amendment unless permission for the withdrawal of the motion or amendment has been refused.

- s) 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 next business
 - iii. To adjourn the debate
 - iv. To put the motion to the vote
 - v. To ask a person to be silent or to leave the meeting
 - vi. To refer a motion to a committee for consideration
 - vii. To adjourn the meeting
 - viii. To suspend any standing order, except those which are mandatory
- t) In respect of Standing Order 6.s 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.
- u) At the end of any speech a member may, without comment, move “that the question be put” “that the debate be now adjourned” or “that the Council do now adjourn”. If such a motion is seconded “that the question be now put” the Chairman must be of the opinion that the question before the Council has been sufficiently debated. If the motion is, he shall call upon the mover to exercise or waive his right of reply and shall put the question immediately after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the Council shall not prejudice the mover’s right of reply at the resumption.
- v) The Clerk shall insert in the summons for every meeting all notices of motion or recommendation properly given in the order in which they have been received unless the member giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that he/she intends to move at some later meeting or that he/she withdraws it.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT

All councillors shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.

See Appendix 1.

8. DISORDERLY CONDUCT

- a) No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly.
- b) If, in the opinion of the Chairman, there has been a breach of standing order 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 above, is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further steps as may be reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or he may adjourn the meeting.

9. QUESTIONS

- a) A councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council provided 7 clear days notice of the question has been given to the Clerk.
- 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) Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

10. MINUTES

- a) Draft minutes should be sent to councillors electronically in normal circumstances within 7 clear working days. They should also be posted on the village notice board within the same period.
- b) 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.
- c) 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 above.

- d) Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- 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 () 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, these minutes will no longer be draft and shown as confirmed.
- g) All councillors will receive a copy of the draft minutes.

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 special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least 4 councillors 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 above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

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. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman’s casting vote.

13. COMMITTEES & FOCUS GROUPS

- 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, and:

- Shall determine their terms of reference
- May permit committees to determine the dates of their meetings
- 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
- 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 Clerk 2 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend
- An ordinary member of a committee who has been replaced at a meeting by a substitute member (in accordance with standing order above) shall not be permitted to propose a motion or vote
- May in accordance with standing orders, dissolve a committee at any time
- The Chairman of the Council is an ex officio of all committees and shall be a voting member of all committees

b) The Council may appoint Focus Groups as described in Appendix 6:

14. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS

- 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 so to do 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 may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee at any time.
- d) The intent of Standing Order 14.b above shall apply to the Chairman of a committee.

15. ADVISORY COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS

- a) The Council may appoint advisory committees comprised of a number of councillors and non-councillors.
- b) Advisory committees may consist wholly of persons who are non-councillors.
- c) The Clerk shall inform the members of each advisory committee of the terms of reference of the committee.

16. FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations see - Appendix 5.

17. CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY COUNCILLORS

- a) Canvassing councillors or the members of a committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from such an appointment. The Clerk shall disclose the requirements of this standing order to every candidate.
- b) A councillor or a member of a committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council or recommend a person for such appointment; 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.

18. 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, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council and its committees shall be available for inspection by councillors and the general public.
- b) The Clerk shall as soon as it is received, enter into a book kept for the purpose the following particulars of every planning application notified to the Council; the date upon which it was received; the name of the applicant; the place to which it relates. This book shall be available for inspection by councillors and the general public.

19. UNAUTHORISED ACTIVITIES

- a) The Council must always act as a corporate body. Members including the Chairman of the Council have no individual authority
- b) Unless authorized by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council or a committee :
 - Inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - Issue ordered, instructions or directions
- c) On occasions where members are authorized to represent the Council they must express only the agreed view of the Council and must as soon as reasonably practicable report back any matters raised to the Clerk and the Council where appropriate.
- d) Where members engage in informal conversation with an individual or group they must take care to differentiate clearly between views which are agreed policy of the Council and those which are their own personal views.

20. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

- a) Councillors 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 above may be removed from a committee by resolution of the Council.

21. POWER OF WELL BEING

- a) Before exercising the power of 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 21.a above was made and expires on the day before the annual meeting of the Council 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 expiry of the Council's preceding period of eligibility referred to in standing order above.

22. MATTERS AFFECTING CLERK

- a) If a meeting considers any matter personal to the Clerk, it shall not be considered until a resolution has been passed to exclude the press and public pursuant to standing order above .
- b) The Clerk shall notify the Chairman or in his absence the Vice Chairman of the Council of any absence occasioned by illness or urgency.
- c) The Chairman of the Council or in his absence, the Vice Chairman shall conduct the appraisal of the Clerk.
- d) The Clerk shall contact the Chairman or in his absence the Vice Chairman of Council in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of a panel of members of the Council.
- e) If an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Clerk relates to the Chairman or Vice Chairman of Council, this shall be communicated to another member of the Council which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of a panel of members of the Council.
- f) The Chairman of the Council shall keep written records of all meetings relating to performance and capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.

23. RELATIONS WITH PRESS/MEDIA

- a) All requests from the press or media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be referred to the Chairman or in his absence the Vice Chairman of Council.
- b) Councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media.
- c) There shall be no audio or video recording or photographs of the meeting without the prior approval of the Council.

24. LIAISON WITH UNITARY COUNCILLOR

- a) An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent together with the agenda to the councillor of Rutland County Council representing Greetham Ward.
- b) Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter sent to Rutland County Council shall be sent to the elected councillor for Greetham Ward.

25. ALLEGATIONS OF BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

- a) On receipt of a notification that there has been a breach of the code of conduct the Clerk shall refer it to the Chairman of the Council.
- b) Where the notification relates to a complaint made by the Clerk, the Clerk shall notify the Chairman of the Council of that fact, who, upon receipt of such notification, shall nominate a person to assume the duties of the Clerk 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) The subject matter of notifications shall be confidential and, in so far as it is possible to do so by law, the Council (including the Clerk and the Chairman of the Council) shall take the steps set out below, together with other steps considered necessary, to maintain confidentiality.
 - Draft the summonses and agendas in such a way that the identity and subject matter of the complaint are not disclosed.
 - Ensure any background papers containing the information set out in the Standing Order 25.a above are not made public.
 - Ensure that the public and press are excluded from meetings as appropriate.
 - Ensure that the minutes of meetings preserve confidentiality.
 - Consider any liaison that may be required with the person or body with statutory responsibility for the investigation of the matter – normally via Rutland CC Monitoring Officer
 - Standing Order 25.c above should not be taken to prohibit the Council (whether through the Clerk or the Chairman of) from disclosing information to members of the Council or to other persons where such disclosure is necessary to deal with the complaint or is required by law.
- d) The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council – unless involved in the complaint – shall have the power to:
 - Seek documentary and other evidence from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter.

- Seek and share information relevant to the complaint.
- 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 Parish Council.

26. VARIATION, REVOCATION & 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 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 Parish Council vote in favour of the same.

27. STANDING ORDERS TO BE GIVEN TO COUNCILLORS

- a) The Clerk shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor upon delivery of their 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 3 times in one meeting may result in him being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.

28. VACATION OF OFFICE BY FAILURE TO ATTEND MEETINGS

Refer to Local Government Act 1972 Clause 85 for exact wording.

In essence, subject to certain qualifications, if a parish councillor fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority, he shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a parish councillor.

Appendix 1 Code of conduct

**The adopted Code of Conduct is the:
Rutland County Council District Council Constitution
Part 5 Codes and Protocols
Members Code of Conduct**

Notes:

- a) If a Parish Council is in doubt as to whether or not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest means that they should not be involved in a discussion about a related business matter, they should ask (and be bound by) the advice of the Rutland County Council Monitoring Officer.
- b) If a Parish Councillor fails to withdraw from a discussion on business related to a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest which they have, this could invalidate any conclusions which the Parish Council reach.
Therefore, where the Parish Clerk has on the agenda an item of business and is aware that a Parish Councillor has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest which may present a conflict of interest, the Clerk should seek guidance from the Rutland County Council Monitoring Officer and advise the Parish Councillor accordingly.

Appendix 2 Freedom of information

This document lays out the procedures by which the Greetham Parish Council will comply with requests for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

All requests for information should be directed to the clerk.

| Type of information requested | Action |
|---|---|
| Procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing Orders • Freedom of information • Complaints • Financial procedures • Burial Ground Rules • Asset register • Risk register | The clerk advises the requestor of the cost of providing the information and requests payment in advance. (Estimate to be based on an “at cost” basis (labour rate £15 per hour plus printing costs plus postage). Information which can easily be supplied electronically will be provided free. |
| Records of meetings Minutes, Agendas | As above |
| Financial records | As above |
| Relating to planning applications | As above |
| Correspondence and replies, including complaints | As above |
| Information on referenda | As above |
| Register of interests | As above |
| Relating to employment of Clerk | Requests relating to employment of the clerk should be referred to the Chairman who will decide what can and cannot be released, bearing in mind the confidentiality of some records. (Data Protection Act 1998), then as above. |
| Information originating from other official bodies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rutland County Council • Government • Other bodies | The clerk informs the requestor that they should apply to the official body which produced the document. |

Appendix 3 Complaints

This document lays out how complaints should be handled by the Parish Council and its councillors.

| Type of complaint | Course of action |
|---|--|
| Alleged failure of a councillor(s) to comply with the Code of Conduct | Advise the complainant to submit the complaint to the Rutland County Council Monitoring Officer and ensure that the Chairman / Clerk are aware of the allegation immediately. |
| Alleged criminal activity | Advise the complainant to report the matter to the police and the Rutland County Council Monitoring Officer and ensure that the Chairman / Clerk are aware of the allegation immediately. |
| Alleged accounting irregularity | In the first instance the clerk should be asked provide an explanation. If the complainant is not satisfied, the clerk should notify the complainant of the Local elector's statutory rights under Section 16 of the Audit Commission Act 1998 |
| General complaints, other than above | The complainant should be asked to put their complaint in writing to the Clerk for consideration by the Parish Council at its next meeting. Alternatively, the person receiving the complaint should record details of the complaint in writing and forward this information to the Clerk. The clerk will provide a written response to the complainant within 14 days of the matter being discussed at the next parish council meeting. If the complaint relates to the Clerk, it should be addressed to the Chairman If the complaint relates to the Chairman, it should be addressed to the Vice Chairman |
| All complaints | All complaints should be brought to the attention of the Parish Council at the next parish council meeting. |

Appendix 4 Correspondence

N.B. ‘Correspondence’ means any communication to the Parish Council in ‘Hard copy’, Written, Fax, E-mail, other digital means or any other format.

| Type of correspondence | Course of action |
|--|---|
| Anonymous correspondence | Anonymous correspondence will be ignored. |
| Correspondence to the Parish Council and/or Parish Councillors | All correspondence received must be tabled at the ‘correspondence’ section of the next scheduled Parish Council meeting. It can only be withdrawn with a full retraction of the content of such correspondence along with the Chair (Vice in Chair’s absence) and/or Clerk’s approval. |
| Personal correspondence to an Individual Councillor | Councillors are permitted to use their judgment and discretion as to the presentation of such correspondence to the Parish Council. In practice this means the correspondence could be dealt with as in the above section; or the information contained within such correspondence could be introduced by the Individual Councillor (Initially within the ‘correspondence’ section of the next scheduled Parish Council meeting). |
| Facebook | The Parish Clerk has a Facebook identity “Greetham Parish Clerk”. This will be used to communicate “official” Parish Council information such as road closure notices. Parish Councillors should not make any Facebook entry under their own name which could be interpreted as coming from the Parish Council. |

A ‘Correspondence journal’, restricted to written correspondence from village residents only, is to be maintained by the clerk. This to include date received, author, recipient, summary of content, date of inclusion at Parish Council meeting, date and detail of any follow up and/or response.

Appendix 5 Financial Policy

General

29. Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be authorized, approved and paid in accordance with these regulations.

a) **Handling of Cash**

- The Clerk will maintain a petty cash tin and duplicate receipt book.
- When any cash is received by the Clerk, a receipt should be written out immediately and the top copy given to the person making the payment.
- The second copy will be retained by the Clerk for record and audit purposes. The reason for the payment should be recorded.
- Any small cash payments which are made by the Clerk or Councillors will be repaid, by cheque, on submission of receipt at the following Parish meeting.
- The maximum level of cash held in the tin before payment into the bank should be agreed with the Parish Council insurers. (Currently £1000).
- All receipts and bank slips should be kept for audit purposes.

Contracts and Tendering

Non discretionary Expenditure

- The Parish Council has no discretion over some expenditure such as utility services and the payment of the agreed Clerk's salary. This will be budgeted for and approved by the Parish Council on a yearly basis. The Clerk is authorized to pay these bills and report the expenditure at the following parish council meeting.
- A contingency fund of a total of £100 shall be available for the Parish Clerk to instigate minor urgent work that cannot wait for approval at a Parish Council meeting. The Clerk is authorize to use this money if the need arises and report the expenditure at the following parish council meeting.

Discretionary Expenditure

All other expenditure of a discretionary nature shall be approved by the Parish Council.

- For contract work, such as grass cutting, tree or hedge work, the Clerk should, where possible seek three quotes for the work and the Parish Council shall decide to whom the work goes. Where this is not practical or possible³, the Parish Council may authorize the work to be done on a lesser number of quotes.
 - For the purchase of equipment, ideally three prices shall be obtained and the Parish Council shall decide on the supplier. Where this is not possible or practical, the Parish Council may authorize the purchase on a lesser number of prices
30. Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.

³ Currently it has been found impractical to obtain three quotes for horticultural work of value less than £100.

Banking Arrangements & Bank Reconciliation

- The Parish Council holds one bank account with Lloyds (Oakham Branch). Statements are received quarterly.
- A minimum of three Councillors will be signatories on the Bank Account, as agreed at a Parish Council meeting. 2 Signature's are required for the signing of cheques and any amendments to the bank account.
- A spreadsheet of monthly financial income and expenditure is maintained.
- The Chairman will nominate a Councillor each quarter to act with the Clerk as below.
 - The Clerk and the Nominated Councillor will reconcile the bank account on a three monthly basis.
 - The “Nominated Councillor” will check this reconciliation against the relevant minutes, invoices, cheque books, cash and paying in books on a quarterly basis to ensure that a) all expenditure has been approved as per these regulations and b) all monies are accounted for.
 - A report on the above will be given at the next Parish Council meeting.
- Income is reported at the Parish Council meeting immediately following receipt. These are in the form of bank transfers, cheques and cash.

Audit

- Accounts are audited internally and externally as agreed by the Parish Council.
- The results of the audit shall be displayed on the village notice board for one month after issue and on the village website.

Insurance

Employers Liability

- The parish council holds an insurance policy with Aviva which provides employers liability cover to the sum of £10 Million.

Public Liability

- The Parish Council has public liability cover to the sum of £10 Million under its insurance policy with Aviva.

Fidelity Guarantee

- The Parish Council has Fidelity guarantee cover of £100,000 under its Insurance policy with Aviva

Appendix 6 Focus Groups

The Council may appoint Focus Groups as follows:

A Focus Group is defined as a 'non-committee' structured informal assemblage.

1. Purpose:

- To gather information, explore options and propose potential strategies for pre-defined subject areas

2. Prohibition

- Focus Groups must not make any decision which obligates Greetham Parish Council to any policy, expenditure or action.

3. Making purpose clear in dealings with third parties

- In all their dealings with other persons the Focus Group must make it clear what their role is and its limitations.

4. Membership

(Note: All Parish Councillors are expected to be on three Focus Groups to spread the work load.)

- Membership of the group is restricted to 3 Parish Councillors or less. (This is to prevent any Focus group having a majority voting position on the full council).
- Additionally, members of public may be co-opted onto the Focus with the approval of the full Parish Council.
- Co-opted members must sign a printed copy of this Appendix to record that they have seen this appendix and agree to abide by it. The signed copies should also be sent to the Clerk for filing. There shall be no more than 3 members of the public on a Focus Group

5. Reporting

- Individual group members are accountable for reporting back their activities to other group member. The group should regularly report to the Parish Council.
- At whatever time the Chairman of the Parish Council may call upon Focus Group to account for its actions
- Focus Groups will report at least quarterly on progress

6. Meetings

- The group will meet as and when required to review the relevance and value of its work
- Focus Groups should keep notes of the key points of their meetings. Day to day secretariat duties will be carried out by group members and not by the Parish Council clerk.

7. Sharing of information

- All communication with the public is to be agreed at a Parish Council meeting and conveyed through the minutes as a decision of that meeting.
- Any form of report, presentation or recommendation made by any Focus Group will be made on the understanding that the Parish Council (and only the Parish Council) will ratify and take forward any action agreed as by them.

8. Sub Groups

- It is not envisaged that any sub groups will be formed

9. Confidentiality

- Focus Group members shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe or ought to be aware is of a confidential nature.
- Focus Group members shall not divulge the workings of the group to the public without the approval of the Parish Council.



Declaration by a Focus Group member

I have read this Appendix and agree to abide to the rules stated therein.

Name:

Signature:

Appendix 7 Co-option process

In the event that there is a vacancy for a parish councillor to be filled by co-option, the following process will be used:

- The clerk will request existing Parish Councillors to put forward suitable⁴ nominations that are willing to serve.
- The nominated persons will be asked to confirm their suitability⁵ and asked to attend the parish council meeting at which the co-option will be considered.
- The nominated person will be invited to speak for no more than three minutes on their reasons for wanting to be on the parish council, should they wish to do so.
- A vote will then be by a show of hands. (Only persons at the meeting may vote).
- In the case of equality of votes, the Chairman will have a casting vote. The Chairman will then declare who is the preferred candidate, who will immediately become a parish councillor with the same rights as all other councillors.

⁴ i.e eligible persons as per election regulations.

⁵ They will be sent a copy of eligibility requirements

Appendix 8 Transparency Regulations

The Department for Communities and Local Government issued a Transparency code in December 2014 – Transparency code for smaller authorities, which specifies information which Parish Councils should publish.

Greetham Parish Council publishes this information on the village website – www.greethamrutland.com .