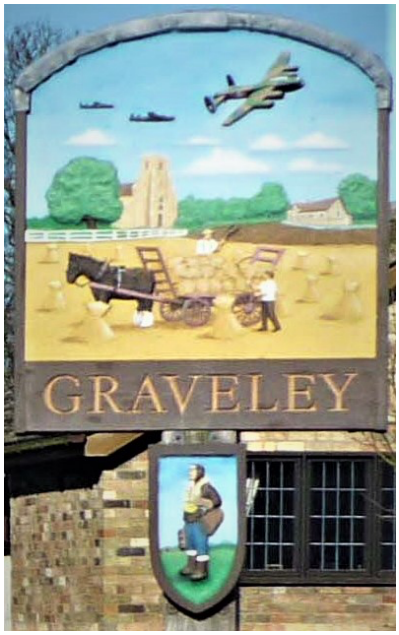


Standing Orders

Document Configuration Management and Control

Version	Description	Originated	Approved	Minute Ref
Version 1	Annual Review	02/11/22	07/05/2024	24/25-30
Version 2	Annual Review	07/01/25		

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1. Introduction to Standing Orders

The Parish Council exists to serve the people living in its parish. Everyone must have confidence that the decisions it makes are taken in the general interest, rather than to serve individual ambitions. One way in which the council can give confidence to parishioners that it is working in everyone's interest is to follow written rules. These rules are published so that people can see that they are being followed and perhaps follow them themselves if they need to engage with the council.

Standing orders are the key document, although detailed rules and regulations are given in separate procedures. Standing orders not only explain how to do things, they also give officers and councillors the authority to do them. Taken altogether, this is a lot of paperwork! Unfortunately, modern life is very complicated and the council's written documents must cover all its activities. Some rules may seem unnecessary, but they are included because the council is legally required to follow them.

In this document[1], standing orders that deal with the same subject are grouped in numbered chapters. Some paragraphs guide the reader and other paragraphs are the standing orders themselves. Paragraphs containing standing orders will be numbered sequentially and the standing order in that paragraph takes the same number. For example, the standing order that every councillor should receive a copy of standing orders on appointment is stated below as *Standing Order 1*.

1.1. The Clerk will give a councillor a copy of Standing Orders on their appointment.

1.2. The council can set its own rules to a large extent, provided this is done formally by resolution at a meeting open to the public.

1.3. All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates statutory or legal requirements, may be varied, suspended or revoked by a council resolution. A motion to add to, vary or revoke a standing order must be proposed by a special motion with written notice to the Proper Officer (defined in the next chapter) by at least 3 councillors.

1.4. The decision of the council's Chair as to how standing orders are applied at a meeting is final.

2. Officers

Parish councillors need someone to administer the council's work and to advise them on legal and procedural matters. This person is called a Proper Officer. Every council also needs someone to prepare accounts and take legal responsibility for its finances, known as the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

Small parish councils usually amalgamate with these two roles in that of Parish Clerk.

[1] These standing orders are based on NALC's model, updated in 2024, but have been re-ordered and re-written in parts to be more easily understood.

Proper Officer

2.1. The Proper Officer shall be either the clerk or another staff member nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when absent.

2.2. The Proper Officer shall:

a. at least three clear days[2] before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee:
    i. serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email)
    ii. provide in a conspicuous place public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).

b. include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 4 clear days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it.

c. convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office.

d. facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors

e. receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities

f. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors

g. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests

h. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures

i. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary

j. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980)

k. arrange for legal deeds to be executed (Standing Orders 7.12 and 7.13).

[2] Clear days are defined in Standing Order 9.

l. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations

m. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose

n. refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chair or in their absence the Vice-Chair within two 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

o. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme.

p. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect (Standing Orders 7.12 and 7.13).

Responsible Financial Officer

2.3. The Council shall appoint an appropriate staff member to undertake the work of the RFO when the RFO is absent. The RFO helps the council to meet its statutory obligations and these are detailed in Chapter 7.

3. Organisation of Meetings

Notice of Meetings

3.1. At least three days notice of any meeting of the council or one of its committees or subcommittees must be given, published both on the parish noticeboard outside the village hall and on the parish council website.

3.2. The minimum three clear days for notice do not include 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, a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.

Appointment of the Chair of a Meeting

3.3. Subject to any standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chair of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chair of the Council.

3.4. The Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent, the Vice-Chair shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent, a councillor is chosen by the councillors present to preside.

Location

3.5. Meetings shall not take place in premises which at the time of the meeting are used to supply alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.

Public Participation

3.6. Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest because the business to be transacted is confidential or for another special reason. The public's exclusion shall be by a resolution stating the reasons.

3.7. Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at any meeting which they are entitled to attend provided the business is on the agenda.

3.8. The time designated for public participation at a meeting shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chair and no member of the public shall speak for more than 5 minutes.

3.9. A question need not require a response at the meeting or start a debate. The chair may direct that a written or oral response be given later.

Minutes

3.10. The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

a. the time and place of the meeting

b. the names of councillors who are present and who are absent

c. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights

d. the grant of dispensations to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights

e. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered

f. if there was a public participation session

g. the resolutions made.

3.11. If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.

3.12. If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved, they shall be taken as read.

3.13. There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with Standing Order 4.13a.

3.14. The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendments made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chair and stand as an accurate record. The draft minutes shall be destroyed after the resolution confirming their accuracy.

3.15. If the chair does not consider the minutes to be accurate after the council has resolved by a majority that they are, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms. "The chair 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 their view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings."

4. Conduct of Meetings

4.1. No meeting shall take longer than 3 hours.

4.2. A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the chair. Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chair shall direct the order of speaking.

4.3. A person attending a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst it is open to the public. To "report" means to film, photograph, make an audio recording, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary so that it is available as the meeting takes place or later. An oral report or oral commentary may only be given with the chair's permission.

4.4. The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for taking their report of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.

Rules of Debate

A thorough debate in which all the issues are explored and every councillor can state their view is essential for the council to make good decisions. These rules provide the framework to enable that thorough debate.

4.5. Motions are considered in the order given on the published agenda. The chair has discretion to change the order during the meeting, for example to accommodate a visiting expert or to group similar matters.

4.6. A motion may not be progressed until it has been moved and seconded.

4.7. The chair may withdraw any motion that is not moved by its proposer.

4.8. Once a motion has been seconded, it can only be withdrawn by the proposer with the seconder's consent and that of the meeting.

4.9. When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:

a. to amend the motion

b. to proceed to the next business

c. to adjourn the debate

d. to put the motion to a vote

e. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting

f. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration

g. to exclude the public and press

h. to adjourn the meeting

i. to suspend particular standing orders except those reflecting statutory or legal requirements.

4.10. Unless permitted by the chair, a councillor may speak only once in the debate on a motion except:

a. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor

b. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since they last spoke

c. to make a point of order

d. to give a personal explanation

e. to exercise a right of reply.

4.11. A councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. Councillors raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which they consider has been breached or specify the irregularity in the proceedings which concerns them.

4.12. A point of order shall be decided by the chair and their decision is final.

4.13. When debating whether to exclude a motion under Standing Order 4.9, a councillor's contributions shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 3 minutes without the consent of the chair.

4.14. Councillors may propose an amendment to remove or add words to a motion. It does not negate the motion.

4.15. A councillor may not move more than one amendment to a motion.

4.16. If an amendment is carried, the amended motion becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendments may be moved. It replaces the original motion.

4.17. An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice is given at the meeting. The chair can request it in writing before consideration.

4.18. The motion's proposer may only propose an amendment to their own motion if the meeting consents. If the motion has already been seconded, the seconder's

consent is also required.

4.19. If there is more than one amendment, the chair shall decide the order in which they will be moved (same meaning as 'proposed').

4.20. Only one amendment shall be moved at a time, unless the chair decides to discuss more than one together. Each amendment, however, must be voted upon separately.

4.21. The mover of an amendment has no right of reply after it has been debated.

4.22. Where a series of amendments are carried, the mover of the original motion has a right of reply either at the end of debating the first amendment or at the very end of debate immediately before the amended motion is put to the vote.

4.23. Before a motion is put to the vote, the chair must be satisfied that it has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion has exercised or waived their right of reply.

Disorderly Conduct

4.24. No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. The chair shall request someone behaving in this way to moderate or improve their conduct.

4.25. If someone disregards the chair's request , the chair or any councillor may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.

4.26. If such a resolution is ignored, the chair may take steps to restore order, including temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

Motions that Require Written Notice

4.27. Any motion must relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event to the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

4.28. No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 7 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.

4.29. The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in its wording. If the Proper Officer considers the wording is still not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until its mover resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer so that it can be understood, at least 6 clear days before the meeting.

4.30. If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chair or the councillors who have convened the

meeting to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda.

4.31. The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion shall be final.

4.32. Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received. Motions rejected shall be recorded by the Proper Officer with an explanation of the reason for rejection.

Motions that Do Not Require Written Notice

4.33. The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:

a. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting

b. to move to a vote

c. to defer consideration of a motion

d. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee

e. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting

f. to change the order of business on the agenda

g. to proceed to the next business on the agenda

h. to require a written report

i. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members

j. to extend the time limits for speaking

k. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest

l. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public

m. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct

n. to temporarily suspend the meeting

o. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements)

p. to adjourn the meeting

q. to close the meeting.

Quorum

4.34. 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. See Standing Order 5.12h for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.

4.35. If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.

Voting

4.36. Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of those with voting rights.

4.37. The chair may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise their casting vote whether or not they gave an original vote. See Standing Orders 5.7 and 5.8 for the different rules that apply to the election of the Chair at annual meetings.

4.38. Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting shall be recorded to show whether each councillor gave their vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next agenda item.

4.39. A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable interest (defined in the code of conduct) in a matter being considered is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on their right to participate and vote on that matter.

Voting on Appointments

4.40. Where more than two 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. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chair.

Previous Resolutions

4.41. A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special

motion which requires written notice by at least three councillors to the Proper Officer (Standing Orders 4.28 - 4.31) or by a motion in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.

4.42. When a motion pursuant to Standing Order 4.41 has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

5. Council Meetings

Ordinary Meetings

5.1. At least three ordinary meetings shall be held in each year (as well as the annual meeting) on such dates and times as the Council decides.

5.2. Following the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair at the annual meeting, the business shall include:

a. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council

b. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of any committees

c. Consideration of the recommendations made by any committees

d. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities

e. Review of the terms of reference for committees

f. Appointment of members to existing committees

g. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with Standing Orders 5.12 – 5.15.

h. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations

i. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses

j. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back

k. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future

l. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment

m. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks

n. Review of the Council's and staff subscriptions to other bodies

o. Review of the Council's complaints procedure

p. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation

q. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media

r. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures

s. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence

t. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings up to and including the next annual meeting.

Annual Meetings

5.3. In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office. In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides. If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting shall take place at 7.30pm.

5.4. The first business conducted at the annual meeting shall be the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council.

5.5. The Chair, unless they have resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting.

5.6. The Vice-Chair, unless they resign or become disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chair at the next annual meeting.

5.7. In an election year, if the current Chair has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chair has been elected. The current Chair shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

5.8. In an election year, if the current Chair has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chair has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

5.9. In an election year, the Chair and councillors shall deliver their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, the Chair shall deliver their acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date.

Extraordinary Meetings

5.10. The Chair may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.

5.11. If the Chair does not call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.

Committees and Sub-Committees

5.12. The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary and:

a. shall determine their terms of reference

b. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council

c. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings

d. shall appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee (Standing Order 5.2f)

e. may appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute committee members (Standing Order 5.2f) whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting if the ordinary members confirm to the Proper Officer three clear days before the meeting that they are unable to attend

f. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chair of the standing committee

g. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chair at its first meeting

h. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three

i. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee

j. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice required for the meetings of a sub-committee

k. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend

l. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

5.13. The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.

5.14. Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.

5.15. Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.

6. Code of Conduct

6.1. All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.

Dispensations

6.2. Unless they has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.

6.3. Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.

6.4. Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.

6.5. A dispensation request shall confirm:

a. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates

b. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote

c. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought

d. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.

6.6. Subject to Standing Orders 6.4 and 6.5, a dispensation request shall be considered by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required. A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer and that decision is final.

6.7. A dispensation may be granted in accordance with Standing Order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:

a. without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede its transaction

b. granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area

c. it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

Code of Conduct Complaints

6.8. Upon notification by the District Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to Standing Orders 9.8 - 9.11, report this to the Council.

6.9. Where the notification relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chair of Council and the Chair shall nominate another staff member to assume the Proper Officer's duties in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action to take in accordance with Standing Order 6.10.

6.10. The Council may:

a. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement

b. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter.

6.11. Upon notification by the District Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.

Restrictions on Councillor's Activities

6.12. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:

a. inspect any land or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect

b. issue orders, instructions or directions.

7. Financial and Legal Matters

Accounts and Accounting Statements

7.1. All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices[3] and the Council's financial regulations.

7.2. The RFO shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:

a. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter

b. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date

c. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported

d. a comparison with the financial year's budget and any actual or potential overspends.

7.3. As soon as possible after the financial year ends on 31 March, the RFO shall provide:

a. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information

b. the Council with accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the *Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)*, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.

7.4. The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March.

7.5. A completed draft AGAR shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days before anticipated approval by the Council. The AGAR, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

Financial Controls and Procurement

7.6. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the RFO, including detailed arrangements for the following:

a. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls

[3] "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".

b. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council

c. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and reports from the internal auditor, required at least annually

d. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and orders of payments

e. whether contracts with an estimated value below £30,000 due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.

7.7. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.

7.8. A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £30,000 but less than the relevant thresholds referred to in Standing Order 7.6e is subject to the "light touch" arrangements under Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).

7.9. Subject to the Council's financial regulations, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:

a. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up

b. an invitation to tender confirming (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process

c. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate

d. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer

e. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed

f. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.

7.10. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.

7.11. Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time, the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016 apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must

comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further details.

Execution and Sealing of Legal Deeds

7.12. A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.

7.13. Subject to Standing Order 7.12, any two councillors may sign on behalf of the Council any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.

8. Staff Matters

8.1. A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council is subject to Standing Orders 9.8 – 9.11.

8.2. Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chair or, if not available, the vice-chair of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to Council at its next meeting.

8.3. The chair or the vice-chair shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by Council.

8.4. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff shall contact the chair or in their absence the vice-chair in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter. This matter shall be progressed by resolution of Council.

8.5. Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Clerk relates to the chair or vice-chair this shall be communicated to another member of the Council, which shall be progressed by resolution of the Council.

8.6. Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.

8.7. In accordance with Standing Orders 9.8 – 9.11, persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records (Standing Order 8.6).

9. Information

Responsibilities to Provide Information

9.1. In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.

9.2. If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, the Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.

Responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation

9.3. The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.

9.4. The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data.

9.5. The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach. The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.

9.6. The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is easily accessible and kept up to date.

9.7. The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.

Management of Information

9.8. The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.

9.9. The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).

9.10. The agenda, supporting papers and minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.

9.11. Councillors, staff, contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.

10. Communication

Relations with the Press/Media

10.1. Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy for dealing with the press and/or other media.

Communicating with District and County Councillors

10.2. An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillors of the District and County Councils representing the area of the Council.

10.3. Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to the District and County Council shall be sent to the ward councillors representing the area of the Council.