

STANDING ORDERS OF THORPE MARKET PARISH COUNCIL

1. Council Meetings

- 1) Ordinary meetings shall be held 4 times a year normally in February, May, August/beginning of September and November on the last Tuesday where possible to do so. Meetings shall normally be held in the Village Hall and commence at 7.00pm unless five days' prior notice is given of a change.
- 2) The Council's Annual Meeting shall be the May meeting. In the year of ordinary elections of Parish Councillors the Annual Meeting shall be held within 14 days after the day on which Councillors elected take office.
- 3) An extraordinary meeting of the Council may be called at any time by the Chair.
- 4) Any two members may submit to the Chair a written and signed request to call an extraordinary meeting. In the event of the Chair not calling an extraordinary meeting within seven days of receiving the request, or refusing to call an extraordinary meeting, the same two members may call an extraordinary meeting.
- 5) Public notice of meetings must be displayed in a conspicuous location in the Parish at least three clear days before the meeting. Where a meeting is called by members of the Council (see 4) above) the notice shall be signed by those members and shall specify the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting (the agenda).
- 6) All members of the Council shall be given (by electronic mail or, in the case of those Councillors notifying the Clerk that they are without access to electronic mail, in writing to their residence) at least five clear days notice of all meetings of the Council from the Clerk, specifying the business proposed to be transacted (the agenda)

2. The Chair

- 1) The Chair of the Council shall normally be elected by the Council at the Annual Meeting. The Chair is eligible for re-election for the coming year.
- 2) The Council shall also elect a Vice-Chair
- 3) The Chair of the Council shall preside over the meeting and exercise powers and duties in relation to the conduct of the meeting.
- 4) In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall chair meetings of the Council.
- 5) In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair, the Clerk will invite nominations and the Council shall select a member to chair the meeting.

3. The Clerk

- 1) The Clerk shall be the proper officer for all proper officer functions
- 2) The Clerk shall arrange and call meetings, prepare the agenda for meetings in consultation with the Chair and circulate these to members at least five working days prior to the date of the meeting.

- 3) The Clerk shall prepare the minutes of Council meetings and normally circulate these to members within two weeks of the date of the meeting.
- 4) In the event of the absence of the Clerk from a Council meeting, members shall appoint another for the purpose of recording that meeting.
- 5) The Clerk shall be the Responsible Financial Officer for the Council.
- 6) The Clerk shall advise the Chair and Members on procedural matters, receive declarations of acceptance of office, record notice of disclosure or prejudicial interests, receive and retain plans and documents, sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council and sign summonses to attend meetings of the Council.
- 7) The Clerk shall carry out and implement any Council, Committee, or Sub-Committee decision.
- 8) The Clerk may take urgent decisions on behalf of the Council in consultation with the Chair and/or other members.
- 9) If at a meeting there arises any question relating to the appointment, conduct, dismissal, salary or conditions of service of the Clerk, it shall not be considered until the Council has decided whether the Public shall be excluded.

4. Quorum

No business shall be dealt with unless there is a quorum of three members present. If there is no quorum the meeting shall be immediately adjourned.

5. Order of Business for Annual Meetings

Election of Chair *(to be followed immediately by the Chair's acceptance of office)*

Receipt of declarations of acceptance from newly-elected Councillors *(where the meeting follows Council elections)*

Members' (and employees') disclosures of interest in items on the agenda

Confirmation and signing of the minutes of the previous meeting

Apologies for absence

Statements from the Chair

Approval of proposed amendments to Standing Orders following the annual review (see below)

Approval of changes to other governing documents

Appointments and nominations

Confirmation of the date, time and place of Council meetings for the year

Other business placed on the agenda

The order of business may be changed by the meeting by motion put by the Chair

6. Order of Business for ordinary meetings

Members' (and employees') disclosures of interest in items on the agenda

Confirmation and signing of the minutes of the previous meeting

Apologies for absence

Statements from the Chair

Receipt of Petitions (Standing Order 11)

Questions from the public (Standing Order 12)

Questions from Members (Standing Order 13)

Residual business from a previous meeting

Other business placed on the agenda

7. Conduct of Meetings

- 1) The meeting shall normally follow the agenda as set unless interrupted by the arrival of a speaker or on grounds of urgency due to a Councillor having to leave the meeting for a specific reason.
- 2) The Chair may open the meeting to the public to allow members of the public to make a comment. Opening of a meeting may only take place following a motion to do so and with the approval of the Council.
- 3) A meeting shall last no longer than two hours with an option to the Council to continue for a further half-hour if necessary.

8. Minutes

- 1) The minutes shall record the names of members present and the Declarations of Interest of any member.
- 2) The minutes shall be circulated to members as soon as possible after the meeting and shall include the date and time of the next meeting.
- 3) The minutes of the previous meeting will have been read by all Councillors and they shall be proposed by a member of the Council as a true and accurate record of that meeting and signed by the Chair of the meeting.
- 4) No discussion other than on points of accuracy shall take place on those minutes
- 5) A resolution or amendment to the minutes must be proposed and seconded and must not have the effect of negating the resolution; an amendment shall either omit words and/or insert others.

9. Disclosure of Interests

1) Thorpe Market Parish Council has adopted the Code of Conduct section 27 of the Localism Act 2011. This is to promote and maintain high standards of behaviour by its members and co-opted members whenever they conduct the business of the Council including the business of the office to which they were elected or appointed or when they claim to act or give the impression of acting as a representative of the Council.

2) This Code of Conduct is based on the principles of selflessness, integrity objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. Full information is detailed in the Council's Code of Conduct document. appendix A & B refers.

Appendix A - the member shall not participate in a discussion or vote on the matter unless the public are able to do so. A declaration only has to be made if it is not already entered in the member's register of interest or the Monitoring Officer is not aware of it.

Appendix B - the member can contribute on the matter only if the public can speak. The member cannot vote on it.

3) The Proper Officer (Clerk) may grant a member a dispensation and vote ONLY if the Council believes that the number of members otherwise prohibited from taking part in the meeting would impede the transaction of the business.

5) In compliance with the Parish Councils (Model Code of Conduct) section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 - each Councillor must complete and submit to the District Council's Monitoring Officer notification of Financial Interests and Other Interests. Councillors are individually responsible for ensuring these forms of notification are kept up to date. Failure to do so within 28 days will lead to Members ceasing to be Councillors.

10. Committees

The Council may at any time appoint a Committee when it is deemed necessary; either the Chair or the Vice-Chair should be a member of that Committee. The Chair of a Committee shall have a second or casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

11. Petitions

- 1) Petitions may be received at ordinary meetings of the Council provided that the petition is received by the Clerk no later than mid-day three working days before the day of the meeting and is signed by at least ten electors within the Parish.
- 2) Petitions may only address a matter for which the Council has responsibility or which affects the Parish.
- 3) Petitions, which are in furtherance of a person's individual circumstances or concern a matter where there is a right of appeal to the Courts, a Tribunal or Government minister, will not be received by the Council.
- 4) A petition will not be received by the Council where the issue it concerns has either been the subject of a petition or a decision of the Council in the last six months.
- 5) One signatory to the petition may speak on the petition for no more than five minutes.
- 6) No discussion shall take place on the petition. A member may move that the petition be referred to the next meeting or to a committee or to another body. Once seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.
- 7) No more than three petitions will be received at any one meeting.

12. Public Question Time

- 1) Any elector within the Parish may put a question to the meeting about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the Parish
- 2) Any elector seeking a response to a question at the meeting must give the Clerk notice of the question of at least five clear days before the meeting
- 3) Questions which are in furtherance of a person's individual circumstances or concern a matter where there is a right of appeal to the Courts, a Tribunal or Government minister will not be received by the Council.
- 4) A question will not be received by the Council where the issue it concerns has been the subject of a decision of the Council in the last six months.
- 5) An elector putting a question may speak for no more than one minute.
- 6) A maximum of 15 minutes will be allowed for public questions.
- 7) No discussion shall take place on any question put. Where practical, the Chair may respond to the question or indicate that a written response will be made
- 8) Where notice of a question has been given, a reply may be given orally at the meeting by the Chair or person nominated by the Chair, or a written reply given to the elector.

13. Members' question time

- 1) Any member may put a question to the meeting about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the Parish.
- 2) A member seeking a response to a question at the meeting must give the Clerk notice of the question at least five clear days before the meeting.
- 3) In putting a question a member may speak for no more than one minute
- 4) A maximum of 15 minutes will be allowed for members' questions
- 5) No discussion will take place on any question put. Where practical the Chair may respond to the question or indicate that a written response will be made.
- 6) Where notice of a question has been given, a reply may be given orally at the meeting by the Chair or person nominated by the Chair, or a written reply given to the member.

14. Voting

- 1) Motions shall be put to the vote following a proposal by a member. Members shall vote by show of hands, or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot
- 2) The Chair may vote on all matters put to the vote but in the case of an equality of votes may give a casting vote even if s/he gave no original vote.
- 3) The Clerk shall record the result of the vote and, if requested by a member of the Council, name those Councillors who voted for or against or abstained. Such a request must be made before moving on to the next business.
- 4) No decision reached by a vote may be put to the vote again until at least six months have elapsed.

15. Planning Applications

- 1) Electronic Planning Applications will be passed by the Clerk to Councillors via email. Councillors will be notified by e-mail, giving brief detail, including a consultation deadline and the Planning Reference Number.
- 2) Councillors will consult the relevant application on line.
- 3) If any Councillor believes that an application will materially affect the character or amenity of the villages they will raise the matter in an email to other Councillors and the Clerk.
- 4) The Councillor residing nearest to the site of the application may contact the nearest resident or residents to discover their reaction and report comments as appropriate.
- 5) Councillors should notify the Clerk of any concerns or views with a copy to the Chair. Nil responses will be taken as 'no objection or comment'.
- 6) The Clerk will summarise the Councillors' view and respond to the Planning Authority. The Clerk will advise the Council of the response at the next Council meeting.
- 7) The Council's procedure for dealing with consultation on Planning Applications will allow a response to be given within the Planning Authority's timetable. However, the procedure shall not be used to circumvent the right of the Council to determine its response in open meeting and the decision taken in a Council meeting will take precedence.

16. Resolutions on Expenditure

- 1) Orders for the payment of invoices, fees and charges shall be authorised by resolution of the Council and signed by two members.
- 2) All resolutions on expenditure shall comply with the Financial Procedures of the Council. A copy of these Financial Procedures shall be held by each member of the Council.

17. Admission of the Public and Press to Meetings

- 1) The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees. However, where the following resolution is passed:
'that in view of the special/confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded'
members of the public shall be instructed to withdraw. The special reasons should be stated. If an individual is needed to provide advice or assistance, they may be invited by name to remain after the exclusion resolution is passed.
- 2) Any member may move a resolution to remove from the meeting room any person(s) constantly interrupting proceedings or behaving in an unruly or obstructive manner.
- 3) A member of the Council may decline to answer any question addressed to her/him other than that set by the Chair.
- 4) Questions and statements from the public may only be made following a resolution which is passed that the meeting should be adjourned. The Chair will normally set aside a time for this at the end of each ordinary meeting.

18. Other Business

- 1) At the end of each meeting the Chairman will ask for any matters that the Council wishes to include on the Agenda for the next meeting. No decisions shall be reached on items brought to the Council's attention at this time.
- 2) Highway and other administrative matters brought to the Clerk's attention at this time may be actioned by the Clerk.

19. Representation on other bodies

- 1) The appointment of a member or members to represent the Parish Council on any local Committees will be confirmed at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
- 2) Reports from members of such Committees may be made verbally or in writing.
- 3) All reports from other bodies must be made in writing and submitted to the Clerk; alternatively they may be made at the end of an ordinary meeting.

Standing Orders adopted by Thorpe Market Parish Council –

Reviewed – September 2022