



**Buriton Parish Council Standing Orders**

**Agreed 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

**COUNCILLORS**

1. Following election or co-option to the Council, each councillor will be issued with a copy of the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council and the Standing Orders of the Council and they will sign the form of Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
2. All councillors will observe the Code of Conduct at all times when on Council business and no member will act in such a way that it will bring the Council into disrepute, behave offensively in meetings or obstruct the Council's business.
3. 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, if any, action to take against him/her, such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.

**MEETINGS**

4. Meetings of the Parish Council should normally be held on the last Monday of every alternate month (January, March, May, July, September and November) at 7pm in Buriton Village Hall unless the Council resolves otherwise.
5. 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 transferred or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion. At the discretion of the Chair, the local District Councillor and/or County Councillor may be invited to take part in items of confidential business.
6. 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. 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.
7. Notices of each meeting of the Parish Council, giving the time, date and place, will be published at least three clear working days before the meeting takes place and will be placed on suitable notice boards in the parish. The notice will contain an agenda of the subjects to be discussed. An agenda for each meeting will be sent, together with an invitation to attend and report, to the County and District Councillors representing the parish of Buriton.
8. The Council may only take decisions on items clearly specified on the agenda; if agreed by the Chair, any urgent items which are not on the agenda may be discussed, but no decision should be made at that meeting.



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9. An Open Forum period will be held at some point during each meeting (normally at about 7.45pm) when members of the public are permitted to speak on any topic that is or could be directly related to Council business.
10. The Chair, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chair, if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.
11. Subject to Standing Order 12, a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the public. To "report" means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, 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 about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.
12. A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.
13. The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking or their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.
14. Subject to there being a quorum present, all issues at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors present and voting thereon. Voting shall be by a show of hands, or if at least two members request, by a secret ballot. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any issue shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his/her vote for or against the proposal. The Chair has a casting vote whenever there is an equal vote on any matter.
15. The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors in respect of the entire meeting. If a councillor has a disclosable interest in any matter being considered this should be declared as soon as it becomes apparent. Any such interests shall be recorded in the minutes. If the matter is a pecuniary or prejudicial interest then the councillor may make representations and answer any questions but should withdraw from the room while the discussion and vote take place. The Council shall endeavour to follow standard local government rules of debate at all meetings.
16. Minutes of all meetings will be taken by the Clerk or other nominated person in the Clerk's absence. The minutes circulated to councillors will be draft minutes until they are approved by the Council at their next meeting and signed by the person presiding at that meeting. No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy. The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of all councillors present and absent.
17. The Council normally appoints to the following Committee: planning; sub-committee; Village Hall & Recreation Ground; and the following working groups: Finance & General Purposes; Rights of Way. These working groups act in an advisory capacity, without decision-making powers, making recommendations to



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the Council although the Planning Committee is authorised to make representations on the Council's behalf between Council meetings. Powers to take other specific decisions can be delegated to Committees by the Council. Decisions would be taken in public with notices published as in Standing Order 7 above. The Council can co-opt persons other than members of the Council to any committee, sub-committee or working group.

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

### **ANNUAL MEETING**

19. An Annual Parish Meeting shall take place each year. 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 can be held on such a day in May as the Council may decide. The election of the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting followed by appointments to Committees.
20. In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, s/he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chair of the Council has been elected. S/He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council and shall give the casting vote in the case of an equality of votes. If the current Chair has not been re-elected the Clerk shall preside at the Annual Meeting until a successor Chair of the Council has been elected.
21. In election year, the Chair of the Council and Councillors must complete 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 of the Council must complete his/her acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date.

### **PROPER OFFICER**

22. The Council may appoint a Clerk to the Council and/or other officers to assist it in the performance of its duties. The Clerk will act as the Proper Officer and will carry out responsibilities as detailed in the contract of employment agreed by the Council.

### **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

23. The Council shall appoint a Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) to manage the Council's financial affairs. Unless otherwise agreed by the Council, the Clerk of the Council shall be the Council's RFO.



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24. Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, and approved by the Council. Expenditure of up to £500 for general maintenance will be agreed by the Chair and Vice Chair, with the payment authorised by two different councillors.
25. Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £500 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender unless determined otherwise by the Council. The Council is not bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.
26. A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in Standing Order 27 is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity.
27. A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £21,3477 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £533,6937 for a public works contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU.
28. A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services or postal services to the public; or the provisions of a port or airport; or the extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £42,6955 for a supply, services or design contract, or in excess of £533,6937 for a works contract; or £663,540 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.
29. Village hall expenditure up to £500 for general maintenance and running of the hall is delegated to the Village Hall Committee. Payments will be authorised by two councillors.
30. The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year (and fix the Precept to be levied) at a meeting before the end of January in each year, unless required to so otherwise by the collecting council, East Hampshire District Council.
31. The Council will monitor financial performance, including comparisons with budget and year-end forecasts, at each meeting of the Council.
32. The Council shall fulfil all accounting and audit procedures required by Legislative Regulations including, but not limited to, annual accounts and returns, internal and



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external audits and VAT returns. All returns will be submitted to the Council for approval.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

33. It is essential that the councillors and Clerk maintain an up-to-date knowledge of their functions and duties. To this end the Council will support necessary agreed training and development.
34. The Council will at all times conduct its affairs in accordance with the relevant legislation and approved Codes of Practice relating to non-discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation or other subject as laid down by law.