

2026

Standing Orders



Shinfield
Parish Council

Shinfield Parish Council

27/05/2026

INDEX

SO		Page
1	Standing Orders	3
2	General Powers of Competence	3
3	Suspension of Standing Orders	4
4	Proper Officer & Responsible Financial Officer	5
	4.1 Proper Officer	5
	4.2 Responsible Financial Officer	6
5	Meeting Of the Council and Committees	7
	5.1 Location of Meetings	7
	5.2 Notice of Meetings	7
	5.3 Public Attendance at Meetings	7
	5.4 Representation by members of the public	7
	5.5 Chairing the Meeting	8
	5.6 Reporting on the Meeting	8
	5.7 Apologies for Absence	9
	5.8 Attendance	9
	5.9 Dispensations	9
	5.10 Meeting Quorums	11
	5.11 Voting at Meetings	11
	5.12 Voting on Appointments	12
	5.13 Meeting Start Time & Duration	12
	5.14 Confidential Business	13
	5.15 Minutes of Meetings	13
	5.16 Draft Minutes	14
	5.17 Conduct at Meetings	14
	5.18 Disorderly Conduct at Meetings	15
6	Annual Meetings	15
7	Ordinary Meetings	18
8	Extraordinary Meetings	19
9	Delegation	19
10	Delegation to Committees	21
11	Committees and Sub-Committees	22
12	Motions requiring written notice to be given to the Proper Officer	23
13	Motions not requiring written notice	24
14	Rules of Debate	25
15	Previous Resolutions	27
16	Urgent Decisions of the Council	28
17	Becoming a Councillor	28
	17.1 Legislation	28
	17.2 Resignations	28
	17.3 Casual Vacancy Co-Option	29
	17.4 Restrictions on Councillor Activities	29
	17.5 Councillor Training & Development	30

18	Canvassing of and Recommendation by Councillors	30
19	Code of Conduct	31
20	Code of Conduct Complaints	31
21	Management of Information	32
22	Responsibilities to Provide information	32
23	Responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation	33
24	Right to Inspect Documents	33
25	Execution and Sealing of Legal Deeds	34
26	Accounts and Accounting Statements	34
27	Financial Controls and Procurement	35
28	Annual Budget, Precepts and Capital Projects	37
29	Chair's Allowance	37
30	Handling Staff Matters	38
31	Relations with the Press/Media/Social Media Policy	39
32	Liaison with Wokingham Borough Councillors	40
	Appendix	
	A. Terms of Reference	
	B. Financial Regulations	
	C. Code of Conduct	
	D. Data Protection Policy	
	E. Press & Media Policy	
	F. Social Media Policy	
	G. Travel & Subsistence Policy	

1. Standing Orders

- a) Standing orders for the organisation and transaction of the Council's business are decided by the Council.
- b) The standing orders use as a base document the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Model standing orders latest update issued 31st March 2025. Standing orders in **bold** type contain legal and statutory requirements. It is recommended that councils adopt them without changing them or their meaning.
- c) Standing orders not highlighted in bold do not incorporate statutory requirements and are aimed at;
 - I. Highlighting matters that merit regulation by standing order.
 - II. Encourage use of standing orders to regulate routine administrative arrangements.
- d) The Council, committees and sub-committees can only act within the law and in accordance with the Council's approved standing orders and financial regulations.
- e) The Council has not adopted standing orders which undermine, override or conflict with any requirements imposed by legislation.
- f) Any reference in the standing orders to financial matters is a reference to the Council's standing orders for the regulation of its financial affairs.
- g) The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor upon delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.

2. General Power of Competence

- a) Subject to any statutory prohibitions, restrictions and limitations, and provided it meets the eligibility criteria, the Council will seek to exercise the General Power of Competence as defined in the 2011 Localism Act.
- b) Eligibility for General Power of Competence is set out in the General Power of Competence (Prescribed Conditions) order 2012 s8;
 - I. The number of members of the council that have been declared to be elected is equal to or greater than two-thirds of the total number of members of the council.
 - II. The Clerk to the parish council holds an appropriate qualification as a Clerk.

3. Suspension of Standing Orders

- a) All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b) A motion to permanently add or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least two councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with the standing orders.

4. Proper Officer & Responsible Financial Officer

4.1 Proper Officer

- a) The Council's Proper Officer shall be the Clerk. In the Clerk's absence the Deputy Clerk shall act as the Proper Officer. In the absence of both Clerk and Deputy Clerk, another staff member, nominated by the Council, shall act as the Proper Officer.
- b) The Council's Proper Officer shall;
 - I. **At least three clear days before a meeting of the council or a committee;**
 - **Serve on councillors by delivery or post to their residences or by email authenticated in such a manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit (provided the Councillor has consented to service by email), a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda of the meeting, and**
 - **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).**
 - II. Set the agenda for all Full Council and committee meetings in accordance with standing order 12, and include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least three days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it.
 - III. **Convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in this office.**
 - IV. **Facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors.**
 - V. **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
 - VI. Hold acceptance of office forms from councillors.
 - VII. Hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests.
 - VIII. Assist with responding to requests made under the freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures (Appendix D).

- IX. Liaise as appropriate with the Council's Data Protection Co-Ordinator in accordance with standing order 23(g).
- X. Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except when there is a resolution to the contrary.
- XI. 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.
- XII. Arrange for legal deeds to be executed in accordance with standing order 25.
- XIII. Arrange and manage the prompt authorisation, approval and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations (see Appendix C).
- XIV. Circulate every planning application notified to the Council to the members of the Planning & Highways committee, and submit the Council's response to the local planning authority portal, and maintain a summary of planning applications considered and the Council's response.
- XV. If a planning application requires consideration before the next Planning & Highways committee meeting OR Full Council meeting, refer this planning application to the Chair, or in their absence Vice-Chair, of the Planning & Highways committee OR Chair of the Council, or in their absence a Vice-Chair of the Council within two working days of receipt in order to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if required.
- XVI. Manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme.

4.2 Responsible Financial officer

- a) The Clerk is the Responsible Financial Officer for the Council. The Council shall in the absence of the Clerk appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer.

5. Meetings of the Council and Committees

5.1 Location of Meetings

- a) **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 reasonable cost.**

5.2 Notice of Meetings

- a) **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**

5.3 Public Attendance at Meetings

- a) **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 a meeting shall be by resolution which shall give the reason for the public's exclusion.**

5.4 Representation by members of the public

- a) Members of the public may make representations, ask and/or answer questions and give evidence at a meeting to which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- b) The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting, in accordance with standing order 5.4(a), shall not exceed 30 minutes unless directed by the Chair of the meeting.
- c) Subject to standing order 5.4(a), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes unless allowed by the Chair of the meeting.
- d) In accordance with standing order 5.4(a), all questions will receive a response; this may be either at or after the meeting and either in writing or verbally. The Chair may permit a short discussion of the matter at the meeting or defer discussion to a future meeting.

5.5 Chairing the Meeting

- a) **The Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside at the meeting. If the Chair is absent from the meeting the Vice-Chair, if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, a councillor chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- b) **Subject to 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-Chairs of the Council.**
- c) Subject to the provisions of section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972, if the Chair is unable to continue in office, for example, on the grounds of ill-health, then a new Chair may be elected in accordance with standing order 6(d.i).

5.6 Reporting on the Meeting

- a) **Subject to standing order 5.6(b) 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 to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report of commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to people not present.**
- b) **A person present at the meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.** Such permission may be granted by the Chair of the meeting.
- c) **The press shall be provided reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of the meeting at which they are entitled to be present.** Members of the press should be asked by the Chair to identify themselves at the start of the meeting.
- d) The Council may make its own recordings of proceedings in Full Council and committee meetings for the purpose of ensuring the accuracy of the minutes. Any such recordings will be destroyed after the minutes of the meeting have been signed as accurate.

5.7 Apologies for Absence

- a) Councillors should normally submit their apologies and reason for absence in advance of the meeting to the Clerk. The Clerk shall report these to the meeting and record apologies in the minutes. Any circumstances where the Council or committee is not prepared to accept the reason for the apology for absence should be done by a formal resolution and vote of the Council or committee.

5.8 Attendance

- a) If a councillor fails to attend three consecutive ordinary Full Council meetings, without a reason accepted by the Council, the Clerk will be instructed to formally write to that councillor regarding their future attendance. If the councillor is absent for six consecutive meetings without a reason accepted by the Council, their membership of the Council will be terminated, and the Clerk will write to inform them accordingly. If a councillor fails to attend for more than six consecutive meetings with an accepted reason for absence, the Council will no longer accept their reason for absence and the six month period until termination shall begin and the Clerk shall inform them accordingly.
- b) If a member fails for three consecutive ordinary meetings to attend a meeting of a committee, they shall be given an opportunity of making an explanation. Unless the explanation is accepted by the committee they shall no longer be a member of that committee.
- c) Standing order 5(8.a) and 5(8.b) shall not apply to a councillor whose absence is due to attendance of a meeting of some other body or organisation to which they have been appointed as the Council's accredited representative.

5.9 Dispensations

- a) **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's Code of Conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitation or restrictions under the code on their right to participate and vote on that matter.**
- b) Unless a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has been granted a dispensation, they shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest or 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.

- c) **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.
- d) A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the meeting of the Council or committee for which the dispensation is required, and that decision is final.
- e) A dispensation request shall confirm;
 - I. The description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the dispensation relates.
 - II. Whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote.
 - III. An explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
 - IV. The Council or committee shall determine the appropriate duration of any dispensation granted.
 - V. The Council or committee can withdraw the dispensation at any time.
 - VI. Details of all dispensations shall be recorded in a dispensation register held by the Clerk.
- f) **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 5.9(d) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply;**
 - I. **Without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business.**
 - II. **Granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
 - III. **It is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

5.10 Meeting Quorums

- a) **No business may be transacted at a meeting of the Council unless at least one third of the whole number of members are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three. There should be no less than three members appointed to a committee. The quorum of a committee should also be three.**
- b) **If no quorum exists when the meeting begins or if during a meeting the number of councillors present and not debarred by reason of a prejudicial declared interest falls below the quorum, no business shall be transacted, and the meeting shall be closed.** The business not transacted at that meeting shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other date as the Proper Officer may set, to be no more than 3 months from the original motion.

5.11 Voting at Meetings

- a) **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors with voting and non-voting rights present and voting.**
- b) **The Chair of a meeting 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.**
- c) **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave their vote for or against that question.** A councillor present at the meeting may request their individual vote to be recorded in the minutes. Any requests to have a recorded vote shall be made before moving on to the next item on the agenda.
- d) Any councillor or non-councillor with voting rights or the Clerk of the meeting may request that any matter or motion is moved by a show of hands. If there is no show of hands a matter or motion may move forward by a general agreement of the meeting.

- e) The following matters and related motions must be resolved by a show of hands;
- I. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council and committees.
 - II. Financial matters
 - III. New council policy or changes to existing policy
 - IV. Approving minutes of a meeting.
 - V. Receiving audit reports.
 - VI. Approval of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR).
 - VII. Approval of the Annual Governance Statement.
 - VIII. Disposal of assets.
 - IX. Action against a councillor or member of public.
 - X. Entering into a lease.

5.12 Voting on Appointments

- a) Where there are more than two candidates nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those candidates has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the candidate 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 candidate. In the event of a tie the casting vote will be made of the Chair of the meeting.

5.13 Meeting Start Time & Duration

- a) Meetings will normally start at 19.30, but other start times are permitted where agreed by the Chair.
- b) Meetings should not exceed a period of 2.5 hours. If a meeting has not closed after 2.5 hours or continues to 22.00 the Chair of the meeting shall at this time propose the motion "That this meeting continue." The motion must be seconded and a vote shall be taken without discussion. If any meeting is adjourned before its business has finished, the business not transacted at that meeting shall be transacted at the next meeting or on a date as the Proper Officer may set, to be not more than three months from the original meeting.

5.14 Confidential Business

- a) **In accordance with s.1(2) Public Bodies (admission to meetings) Act 1960, the public may not be excluded from council meetings unless there are special reasons to justify such exclusion.**
- b) The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of the meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.
- c) Councillors should not disclose any confidential or sensitive information unless relying on a public interest or whistleblowing defence.
- d) A councillor failing to observe requirements of standing order 5(14.c) relating to confidential business may, subject to resolution by the Council be excluded or suspended from the membership of the relevant committee.

5.15 Minutes of Meetings

- a) The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following;
 - I. The time and place of the meeting.
 - II. The names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent.
 - III. Interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights.
 - IV. The grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights.
 - V. Whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered.
 - VI. If there was a public participation session.
 - VII. The resolutions made.
 - VIII. Other decisions made by the meeting.

5.16 Draft Minutes

- a) 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 for accuracy, they shall be taken as read. Any inaccuracies should be reported to the Clerk in advance of the meeting. The Clerk shall notify the meeting of any amendments.
- b) 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 13(a.ii).
- c) The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d) If the Chair of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect;

“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.”
- e) Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 5.14 and standing order 5.15 and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the approved minutes will become the formal record of the meeting.

5.17 Conduct at Meetings

- a) All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council (see Appendix B). **The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights in respect of the entire meeting.**
- b) A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak. The Chair of the meeting may require speakers to stand (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort).

- c) Any person speaking at a meeting shall address their comments to the Chair of the meeting.
- d) Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chair shall direct the order of speaking.

5.18 Disorderly Conduct at Meetings

- a) No person shall obstruct the transactions of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the Chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b) If person(s) disregards the request of the Chair of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the Chair of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, should be put to the vote without discussion.
- c) Should the motion in standing order 5(18.b) refer to the Chair of the meeting, then if so resolved, the Vice-Chair or another nominated councillor shall chair the rest of the meeting.
- d) If the resolution made in accordance with standing orders is ignored, the Chair of the meeting may take further steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

6. 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 the new councillors elected take office.** Election years are 2027, 2031 and every four years thereafter.
- b) **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May that the Council decides.**
- c) **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 18.00.**

- d) The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council.**
- I. The position of Chair shall be open to all members of the council. Nominations for the position of Chair should be submitted on an official nomination form. Completed and signed nomination forms should be submitted to the Clerk at least seven clear working days before the annual meeting of the Council. The election of the Chair shall be either by a show of hands or by a ballot if there is more than one candidate.
 - II. The election of the Vice-Chair shall be the second business completed at the annual meeting of the Council. Nominations for the position of Vice-Chair should be submitted on an official nomination form. Completed and signed nomination forms should be submitted to the Clerk at least seven clear working days before the annual meeting of the Council. The election of the Vice-Chair shall be either by a show of hands or by a ballot if there is more than one candidate. If no nominations are received for the Vice-Chair position, it shall remain vacant until such time as a valid nomination is received, and the election shall take place at the next Full Council meeting.
 - III. Where the Chair of the council resigns between Annual Meetings then the procedure set out at 6.d.I shall apply and the election of the new Chair shall be the first order of business at the next meeting of Full Council.
- e) The Chair of the Council, unless they have resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the next annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- f) The Vice Chair of the Council, unless they resign or they become disqualified shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chair of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g) In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chair of the Council has been elected. The current Chair of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

- h) **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chair of the Council has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of a new Chair of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- i) Following the election of the Chair of the Council and Vice-Chair of the Council at the annual meeting, the order of business shall be as follows;
- I. **In an election year, delivery by councillors of their declaration of 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, delivery by the Chair of the Council and Vice-Chair of acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves to do this at a later date.**
 - II. In an election year, to re-attest that the Council is eligible to exercise the General Power of Competence.
 - III. Appoint committee members to the standing committees.
 - IV. Agree the next twelve months meeting schedule for Full Council and committee meetings.
 - V. Review the Council's standing orders and take recommendations for any amendments and updates to the document.
 - VI. Appoint representatives to outside bodies.
 - VII. Review the Council's Risk Register.
 - VIII. Review and approve the schedule of annual subscriptions.
 - IX. Receive and review the schedule of annual licenses.
 - X. Further business shall be as for ordinary meetings.
- j) Where a councillor expresses an interest to join a committee at any time other than the Annual Meeting, the request should be made to the Clerk who will add to the agenda for the next Full Council meeting a resolution for the Council to "RECEIVE and CONSIDER the appointment of Cllr X to committee Y". Full Council may resolve to remove a councillor from the membership of a specific committee. This may result following a breach of the code of conduct or where Full Council wishes to rebalance the number of members on each committee.

7. Ordinary Meetings

- a) In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, a least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**
- b) The order of business at ordinary meetings shall be as follows;
 - I. Public questions.
 - II. Apologies.
 - III. Declaration of member's interests.
 - IV. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting.
 - V. Matters arising.
 - VI. Reports from Borough Councillors.
 - VII. Reports from committees & sub-committees.
 - VIII. Other council business & motions as set out on the agenda in accordance with standing order 4.1(b.ii)
 - IX. Invoices for payment.
 - X. Correspondence.
 - XI. Confidential items.
 - XII. Date of next meeting.
- c) The draft minutes of committees that have sat during the month are noted at that month's Full Council meeting. Any matters raised should be referred back to the relevant committee.

8. Extraordinary Meetings

- a) **The Chair of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b) **If the Chair of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within 7 days of having been requested to do so 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 Chair of a committee or a sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee at any time.
- d) If the Chair of the committee or a sub-committee does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee within 7 days of having been requested to do so by two councillors, those two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.

9. Delegation

- a) The legal basis of the delegation conferred by this document is contained in the following provisions of the Local Government Act 1972.
- b) Subject to any legislation to the contrary, the Council may delegate any matter to a committee, a sub-committee or an officer of the authority, or to any other local authority. Unless the Council decides otherwise, a committee may further delegate to a sub-committee or officer.
- c) The membership of committees is fixed by the Council, and of sub-committees/working parties by the appointing committee. In constituting such groups, the Council or committee shall have full regard to the implications on the officer and member workload when creating sub-committees.
- d) The Council should respect the decisions of committees and sub-committees where those decisions have been duly delegated and

made within the appropriate terms of reference. Matters of concern should be referred back to the relevant committee or sub-committee.

- e) It is the intention that decisions should be taken at the most suitable level. Officers are given power over the day-to-day administration of the Council, committees to decide matters within their terms of reference, and matters of major policy should be decided by the Council.
- f) The Council reserves the right to decide on any matter it has previously delegated to a committee, sub-committee, officer or local authority.
- g) Committees can only exercise delegated powers where there is budgetary provision for any proposed expenditure. They can spend within their total allocated budget to enable smaller projects, but larger variations must be referred to the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) committee. If no budgetary provision is available, delegated powers may only be exercised subject to obtaining approval for a supplementary estimate. This must be done through referring the matter firstly to the F&GP committee which can provide the approval for the expenditure and the recommendation can proceed to a Full Council meeting.
- h) In the event that there is a disagreement between committees regarding which one has delegated powers to deal with a particular matter, it shall be referred to a Full Council meeting for resolution.
- i) In making any decisions or recommendations, each committee should consider the implications in relation to;
 - I. Best practice.
 - II. Council objectives/policies.
 - III. Crime & disorder.
 - IV. The environment.
 - V. Finance and staffing implications.
 - VI. The impact on the parish.
 - VII. Potential impact on the Council's Risk Register.

10. Delegation to Committees

- a) The Council may appoint standing committees or sub-committees as may be necessary and;
 - I. Shall determine their terms of reference (see Appendix A), including meeting schedule, composition and quorum.
 - II. Shall permit committees to recommend to the Council the number, date and times of their meetings up until the date of the next annual meeting.
 - III. Shall permit a committee to vary dates and times of meetings for operational reasons without reference to the Council.
 - IV. Subject to standing order 11(c), shall appoint and determine the terms of office of councillor and non-councillor members of a committee. Membership of committees shall be determined at each annual meeting.
 - V. Dissolve a committee at any time.
- b) The delegated powers of each committee are approved by the Council and are set out in their terms of reference.
- c) The terms of reference may be amended at any time by the Council with or without any recommendation from a committee, or other body.
- d) The following matters are reserved to the Council;
 - I. The making of standing orders and financial regulations.
 - II. The appointment of permanent representatives to outside bodies.
 - III. The making of byelaws.
 - IV. The dismissal of the Clerk and Deputy Clerk.
 - V. To determine policies and monitor their application.
 - VI. Approval of final accounts and AGAR statement.
 - VII. Setting the Council's budget and precept.
 - VIII. Approval of terms of reference for committees.
 - IX. Final arbitration of any matter.

11. Committees and Sub-Committees

- a) **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the council.**
- b) **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee may be non-councillors.**
 - I. The Council has determined that each sub-committee including advisory committees shall include a minimum of one councillor.
- c) **Unless the Council determines otherwise. A committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee**
- d) The standing committees of the Council are;
 - I. Arts, Culture and Events committee
 - II. Children & Young Adults committee
 - III. Facilities committee
 - IV. Planning & Highways committee
 - V. Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) committee
 - VI. Staffing committee
- e) Each committee shall have a Chair and Vice-Chair. The Chair and Vice-Chair of a committee are normally elected at the first meeting of the committee after the annual meeting.
- f) The Vice-Chair of the Council shall be the Chair of the F&GP committee and the Staffing committee.
- g) The Chair of the Council will not be a member of the Staffing committee.
- h) Members of the Staffing committee should have relevant current experience in employment law and best practice or be prepared to attend appropriate training as agreed by the Staffing Committee.
- i) It is expected that all councillors will take an active role in the Council's activities and sit on a least one committee.

- j) A councillor who has not been appointed a member of a committee may attend meetings of that committee as a member of the public in accordance with standing order 5.4(a).

12. Motions requiring written notice to be given to the Proper Officer

- a) A motion will require written notice unless it is a motion specified in standing order 13.
- b) A motion may be submitted by a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights and shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations of an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- c) In accordance with standing order 4(b.ii), no motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Council's Proper Officer at least 7 clear days before the next meeting.
- d) The Proper Officer may not make any changes to a motion received in accordance with standing order 12(b), other than to correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording.
- e) If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance to standing order 12(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer in clear and certain language at least 7 clear days before the meeting.
- f) If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chair of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included or rejected in the agenda.
- g) Having consulted the Chair or councillors pursuant to standing order 12(f), the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
- h) Notice of every motion received in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be numbered in the order received and shall be recorded in a register of motions, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.

- i) Every motion rejected in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be duly recorded in the register of motions with a note by the Proper Officer giving the reasons for its rejection, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.

13. Motions not requiring written notice

- a) Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice to the Proper Officer;
 - I. To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
 - II. To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - III. To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
 - IV. To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
 - V. To defer consideration of a motion.
 - VI. To require a written report.
 - VII. To move to a vote.
 - VIII. To close or adjourn debate.
 - IX. To refer a motion or a matter to a committee or a sub-committee or an employee if it falls within their terms of reference. If urgent or expedient the Chair may direct the motion to be dealt with at the present meeting.
 - X. To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any councillors thereto.
 - XI. To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have an effect of nullifying it.
 - XII. To extend the time limit for speaking.
 - XIII. To not hear further from a councillor or member of public.
 - XIV. To exclude from the meeting a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct.
 - XV. To give the consent of the council if such consent is required by the council.
 - XVI. To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law.
 - XVII. To adjourn or temporarily suspend the meeting.

XVIII. To answer questions from councillors.

XIX. To close the meeting.

- b) Reports may be submitted and included with meeting agendas to support the furtherance of council business. Late reports will be permitted only by exception and with the agreement of the Chair.

14. Rules of Debate

- a) Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chair of the meeting.
- b) A motion (including an amendment) shall not be taken to a vote unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c) A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the Chair of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d) If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e) An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to the motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f) If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g) An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting. If requested by the Chair, a member present or the Clerk of the meeting, the amendment shall be set down in writing before the vote is taken.
- h) A councillor may move an amendment to their own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i) If there is more than one amendment to the original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chair of the meeting.

- j) Subject to standing order 14(k) only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chair of the meeting.
- k) One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chair of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted on separately.
- l) A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m) The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of the debate on it.
- n) Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of the debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o) Unless permitted by the Chair of the meeting, a councillor may speak only once in the debate on a motion except;
 - I. To speak on an amendment moved by another councillor.
 - II. To move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since they last spoke.
 - III. To make a point of order.
 - IV. To give a personal explanation.
 - V. To exercise a right of reply.
- p) During the debate a councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or to provide clarification and the councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking.
- q) A councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which they consider has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting they are concerned by.
- r) A point of order shall be decided by the Chair of the meeting and the decision of the Chair shall be final.

- s) When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except;
 - I. To amend the motion.
 - II. To proceed to the next business.
 - III. To adjourn the debate.
 - IV. To put the motion to the vote.
 - V. To ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting.
 - VI. To refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration.
 - VII. To exclude the public and press.
 - VIII. To adjourn the meeting.
 - IX. To suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory or legal requirements.
- t) Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the Chair of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived their right of reply.
- u) Excluding motions moved under 14(s) the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 5 minutes without the consent of the Chair of the meeting.

15. Previous Resolutions

- a) A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except by a special motion, which requires written notice and is proposed by at least two members of the council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of a report or recommendation of a committee.
- b) When a special motion according to standing order 15(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

16. Urgent Decisions of the Council

- a) Urgent decisions required between scheduled Council meetings are delegated to the Clerk (or in their absence the Deputy Clerk) in consultation with the Chair or, in the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair.
- b) Decisions made under this delegation will be reported to and included in the minutes at the next Council meeting.
- c) Where appropriate, the Clerk may decide that an extraordinary meeting of the Council be called to deal with the urgent matter.
- d) The Clerk (or in their absence the Deputy Clerk) may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council which is necessary to carry out any repairs or replacement or other work which is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £5,000, with the counter signature of the Finance Manager.

17. Becoming a Councillor

17.1 Legislation

- a) For the election of councillors, the standard rules apply in accordance with the current legislation governing the election of councillors, casual vacancies and co-option of suitable persons, where appropriate.

17.2 Resignations

- a) When a councillor tenders their resignation, the Clerk shall notify the Head of Electoral Services at Wokingham Borough Council of the vacancy.
- b) Wokingham Borough Council shall advertise the vacancy and if one of more applications are received Wokingham Borough Council will organise an election.
- c) If no applications are received, then in accordance with s.87(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council will give public notice of the casual vacancy. The public notice will invite applications from candidates who satisfy the eligibility criteria for being a councillor.

17.3 Casual Vacancy Co-Option

- a) A person is eligible to be co-opted provided they are;
 - I. Qualified to be a councillor pursuant to s.79 of the 1972 act.
 - II. Not disqualified pursuant to s.80 of the 1972 act.
- b) A Council may need to investigate or obtain evidence about a candidate's eligibility to be a councillor if standing order 17.3(a) is challenged.
- c) The co-option procedure is as follows;
 - I. The Clerk shall invite applicants to an initial discussion and establish they meet the statutory requirements to become a councillor.
 - II. Applicants are required to attend at least two Council and two committee meetings within a three month period.
 - III. The Clerk shall offer an informal meeting between the applicant and the Chair of the Council.
 - IV. Applicants shall provide a personal profile for consideration of the Council and be interviewed by the Council at a mutually agreed Full Council meeting.
 - V. The Council will need to consider fairly and objectively if candidates are suitable for co-option.
- d) The public will be excluded from any discussion of the co-option of a candidate under the s.1(2) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.
- e) Any decision made by the Council regarding co-option should be transparent. Any decisions to not co-opt, and the reasons behind that decision, shall be conveyed in writing, by the Clerk, to any unsuccessful candidate

17.4 Restrictions on Councillor Activities

- a) No individual councillor shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee issue orders, instructions or directions unless authorised by a resolution of the Council or the relevant committee.

- b) Unless duly authorised, no councillor shall inspect any land/or premises which the Council has a right or duty in inspect.

17.5 Councillor Training & Development

- a) Continuous training and development is recommended for all councillors, this will include;
 - I. Induction training for new councillors.
 - II. Committee specific training as set out in the terms of reference for the committee.
 - III. Training in respect of chairing the Council/committees as required.
 - IV. Additional training provided by the Council for councillor development.
- b) A register will be kept by the Clerk recording all training undertaken by councillors.
- c) The Council shall ensure that adequate funds for training of councillors are provided for in the annual budget.

18. Canvassing of and Recommendations by Councillors

- a) Canvassing councillors or the members of a committee or sub-committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from such an appointment. The Proper Officer shall disclose the requirements for this standing order to every candidate.
- b) A councillor or a member of a committee or sub-committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council or recommend a person for such appointment or promotion; but nevertheless, any such person may give a written testimonial of the 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.

19. Code of Conduct

- a) All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council (see Appendix B).
- b) Councillors shall also observe the Nolan Principles for Public Life, as follows;
 - I. Selflessness
 - II. Integrity
 - III. Objectivity
 - IV. Accountability
 - V. Openness
 - VI. Honesty
 - VII. Leadership

20. Code of Conduct Complaints

- a) Upon notification by Wokingham Borough 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 report this to the Council.
- b) Where the notification in standing order 20(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chair of the Council of this fact, and the Chair shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 20(d).
- c) The Council may;
 - I. Provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement.
 - II. Seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter.
- d) **Upon notification by Wokingham Borough Councillor that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Code of Conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

- e) Where a notification relates to a complaint made by an employee (not being the Proper Officer), the Proper Officer shall ensure that the employee in question does not deal with any aspect of the complaint.
- f) Where disclosure of information relating to a complaint is necessary to deal with the complaint or is required by law, the standing orders shall not prohibit any member of the Council or the Proper Officer from disclosing such information to members, officers or other persons.

21. Management of Information

- a) **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.**
- b) **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).**
- c) **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d) **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

22. Responsibilities to Provide Information

- a) **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.**

- b) **The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulation 2015.**

23. Responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation

- a) **The Council shall appoint a Data Protection Officer (although currently this is not a legal requirement). (Data Protection Act 25 May 2018).**
- b) **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data.**
- c) **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- d) **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breeches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**
- e) **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f) **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**
- g) **Until standing order 21(a) becomes a legal requirement, the Council shall appoint a Data Protection Co-ordinator to fulfil the responsibilities in standing order 21.**

24. Right to Inspect Documents

- a) **A councillor may, for the sole purpose of their official duties inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee or a sub-committee, and request a copy for the same purpose.**
- b) **A councillor may not inspect any documents which are restricted by any provision in the standing orders for reasons of confidentiality, determined by the Clerk.**

- c) The Council may overrule any determination made by the Clerk in relation to standing order 24(b).

25. Execution and Sealing of Legal Deeds

- a) A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution of the Council.
- b) In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 25(a), any two members of the Council may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**
- c) Under normal circumstances the members signing any deed in relation to standing order 25(b) will be the Chair of the Council and Chair of the committee to which the deed is related.

26. Accounts and Accounting Statements

- a) "Proper Practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners Guide."
- b) All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations (see Appendix C).
- c) At each Full Council meeting the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide the following;
 - I. Expenditure made since the previous meeting.
 - II. Proposed expenditure requiring approval of the Council.
- d) At each Finance & General Purposes committee meeting the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide the following;
 - I. Updates to the Risk Register
 - II. Financial reports to include bank reconciliations, forecasts and reserves.
 - III. Reports on CIL budget and forecasts.

- e) At the first meeting after the annual meeting the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide for consideration and approval by the Council the following;
 - I. Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR).
- f) The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply in the form of accounts determined by the Council for the year to 31st March. 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 30th June.

27. Financial Controls and Procurement

- a) The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer which will be reviewed annually.
- b) The financial regulations will include the following;
 - I. Keeping of accounting records and systems of internal control.
 - II. Financial risk assessment and management.
 - III. The annual reports from the internal auditor.
 - IV. Allowing the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts.
- c) **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 25(f) 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.**
- d) Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, 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;

- I. A specification for the goods, materials, services or the executions of the works shall be drawn up.
 - II. An invitation to tender shall be drawn up to the (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, (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff of the Council to encourage support for their tender outside the prescribed process.
 - III. The invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate.
 - IV. Tenders are submitted in writing in a sealed, marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer.
 - V. Tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of a least one councillor after the deadline for submission on tenders has passed.
 - VI. Tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or a sub-committee.
- e) Any tender failing to comply with standing order 21(c) regarding canvassing of councillors to obtain a tender shall be disqualified.
- f) Neither the Council or a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- g) A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £181,302 for a public service of supply contract or in excess of £4,551,413 for a public works contract shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts regulations 2015 which included advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website.**
- h) A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £363,424 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,551,413 for a works contract; or £820,370 for a social and other specific services contract shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.**

28. Annual Budget, Precepts and Capital Projects

- a) **The Council shall approve its budget for the forthcoming financial year at a meeting before the end of January.**
- b) In each budget cycle individual committees should identify their revenue income and expenditure for the upcoming year and consider any capital projects they want to put forward. Draft budgets will be considered by the Finance & General Purposes (F&GP) committee at their December meeting and recommendations will be made to the Council at the Full Council meeting in January.
- c) Capital projects arising outside of the budget cycle shall be considered by the relevant committee prior to referral to the F&GP committee to provide, if within the budget, the approval for the expenditure. The capital project can then proceed for consideration by the Council.

29. Chair's Allowance

- a) The Council will pay the Chair a reasonable allowance to enable them to meet the expenses of their office. The amount should be fixed in advance and represent reasonable reimbursement to the Chair for the general duties of their office, for example: communicating with the Clerk and other Council employees, travel within the parish, attending events and meetings in their public figure role to represent the Council.
- b) The Chair's allowance will be paid in quarterly instalments and will be in addition to the Council's Travel and Subsistence policy (Appendix G) for members.
- c) The spending of the Chair's allowance is at the Chair's discretion. The Chair shall provide an annual statement to the F&GP committee that any allowance paid has been used to meet the expenses of their office.
- d) The F&GP committee shall review the use and sufficiency of the Chair's allowance annually.

30. Handling Staff Matters

- a) Only the Staffing committee or the Council shall consider matters personal to a Council employee.
- b) In accordance with standing order 5(14), the public and press may be excluded from meetings where matters personal to a Council employee are considered.
- c) The Clerk shall notify the Chair of the Staffing committee where the Clerk is or expects to be absent from work for more than three working days.
- d) The Chair of the Staffing committee shall conduct the Clerk's annual performance and development review. The review shall be reported in writing and is subject to approval by the Staffing committee.
- e) Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the following shall apply;
 - I. Employee grievances shall be managed by the Clerk and reported to the Staffing committee.
 - II. Employee grievances relating to the Clerk shall be reported to and managed by the Chair of the Staffing committee.
 - III. Employee grievances relating to the Chair of the Staffing committee shall be reported to and managed by the Clerk.
 - IV. In the events of any disputes the Chair of the Council shall act as an independent arbiter.
- f) The Council shall retain access to dedicated HR support.
- g) Anyone responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential all matters relating to meetings and records of employee performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters as confidential.
- h) Line managers shall have access to the records relating to the performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters of any member of their team.
- i) Members of the Staffing committee shall have access to any employee records required to fulfil the terms of reference for the committee.

- j) The Council shall keep any data relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected. The Clerk shall, in accordance with standing order 24(b) and GDPR legislation, determine who may have access to such records.
- k) Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to employee records including medical history where necessary for the effective management of the employee.

31. Relations with the Press/Media/Social Media

- a) All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media (Appendix E).
- b) In accordance with the Council's policy in respect to dealing with the press and/or other media, councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media.
- c) In accordance with the Council's policy on social media (Appendix F), councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral, written, visual statements or express any opinion via social media platforms unless authorised to do so.

32. Liaison with Wokingham Borough Councillors

- a) An invitation to attend all Full Council meetings shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of Wokingham Borough Council representing the area of the Council.
- b) A register of attendance at Full Council meetings and reports submitted by Borough Councillors shall be maintained by the Clerk.

Please advise the Clerk/Deputy Clerk if you wish a hard copy of any of the appendices

Appendix	
A.	Terms of Reference
B.	Financial Regulations
C.	Code of Conduct
D.	Data Protection Policy
E.	Press & Media Policy
F.	Social Media Policy
G.	Travel & Subsistence Policy