

Lindal and Marton Parish Council

STANDING ORDERS and FINANCIAL INSTRUCTIONS

As amended October 2022

Government legislation introduced in April 2020, following the outbreak of the coronavirus, allowed for parish councils to meet "remotely", ie, not face-to-face but via audio or video link, with members of the public participating should they wish to do so. This facility was removed in May 2021, with councils required to meet thereafter in person. Should the legislation change again, the Council may, depending on circumstances, re-introduce "remote" meetings.

1. Meetings

- a) Meetings of the Council shall, unless circumstances dictate otherwise, be held on the first Thursday of the month, at 7.30 pm, in the Buccleuch Hall, Lindal.
- b) In addition to the Statutory Annual Parish Council Meeting at least three other meetings shall be held in each year.

2. The Statutory Annual Meeting

- a) In an election year the Annual Parish Council Meeting shall be held on, or within 14 days following, the day on which the councillors elected take office.
- b) In a year which is not an election year the Annual Parish Council Meeting shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.
- c) In respect of (a) and (b) the Meeting shall normally be in conjunction with the normal monthly meeting.

3. Chairman of the Meeting

The person presiding at a meeting may exercise all the powers and duties of the Chairman in relation to the conduct of the meeting.

4. Proper Officer

The Proper Officer shall be the Clerk who shall have the responsibility

- a) To receive Declarations of Acceptance of Office.
- b) To receive and record notices disclosing interests at meetings.
- c) To receive and retain plans and documents.
- d) To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council.
- e) To sign and issue the summons to attend meetings of the Council.
- f) To keep proper records for all Council meetings.

5. Quorum of the Council

- a) Three members shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the Council.

b) If a quorum is not present or if during a meeting the number of councillors present (not counting those debarred by reason of a declared interest) falls below the required quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned and business not transacted shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Chairman may determine.

6. Voting

a) Members shall vote by show of hands or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot.

b) If a member so requires, the Clerk shall record the names of the members who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it. Such a request must be made before moving on to the next business.

c) Subject to (1) and (2) below the Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in any case of an equality of votes may give a casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.

(1) If the person presiding at the annual meeting would have ceased to be a member of the council but for the statutory provisions which preserve the membership of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman until the end of their term of office he may not give an original vote in an election for Chairman.

(2) The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Chairman.

7. Order of Business

At each Annual Parish Council Meeting the order of business shall be:-

- a) To elect a Chairman of the Council
- b) To receive the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.
- c) In the ordinary year of election of the Council to discuss the filling any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.
- d) To decide when any Declarations of Acceptance of Office which have not been received as provided by law, shall be received.
- e) To carry out any other business as agreed by the Council, including matters normally included in an ordinary monthly meeting.

At every meeting other than the Annual Parish Council Meeting the order of business shall be

- a) To appoint a Chairman for that meeting if the Chairman be absent.
- b) To receive apologies for absence.
- c) To consider whether there are any items requiring urgent attention which were received too late for inclusion on the agenda
- d) To accept any Disclosures of Interest from Councillors.
- e) To read and consider the Minutes of the previous meeting; provided that, if a copy has been circulated to each member not later than the day of issue of the summons to attend the meeting, the Minutes may be taken as read.

f) After consideration, to approve the authorisation of the minutes as a correct record, by signature of the person presiding.

g) To deal with matters arising from the minutes

8. Discussions and Resolutions Affecting Employees of the Council

If at a meeting there arises any question relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service, of any person employed by the Council, it shall not be considered until the Council has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded. (See Standing Order No.13.)

9. Finance

a) The payment of money shall be authorised by resolution of the Council and cheques signed by two members. Alternatively, payments may be made by bank transfer.

b) Where it is necessary to make a payment before it has been authorised by the Council, such payment shall be certified as to its correctness and urgency by the appropriate officer with the approval of the Chairman of the Council. Details shall then be submitted to the next meeting of the Council for ratification. (Petty cash items excluded: see item (g) below)

c) The council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of the month of January.

d) The Council shall appoint an Honorary Auditor, responsible for the periodic auditing of the Council's financial records, together with the production of an annual report to the Council.

e) The Council shall appoint a member(s) as its Internal Audit Assessor in order to satisfy itself that the Internal Audit mechanisms are satisfactory.

f) The Clerk shall maintain and, where necessary, revise the Council's Policy Document on Risk Management.

g) The Clerk shall maintain a petty cash register for minor items such as postage, stationary, with re-imbursement by bank transfer at regular intervals.

h) The Clerk's remuneration shall be via the PAYE system, (introduced in 2012.)

i) Notification of (h) to HMRC shall be by a professional accountant (from September 2022)

10. Code of Conduct and Disclosure of Interests

All members shall abide by the Code of Conduct as provided at the beginning of each Councillor's term of office.

11. Minutes of meetings

a) All minutes kept by the Council shall be open for inspection by any member of the Council or general public.

b) Minutes will normally be displayed:- 1) on public notice boards ; 2) via publication in the Parish Magazine "Aspects"; 3) on the community website.

c) Minutes will be provided to all Councillors and also to those borough and county councillors relating to the Parish, together with others as might be appropriate. Distribution will normally be by email, where this is possible.

12 Agendas for meetings.

- a) The Agenda for the monthly meeting will be construed as the summons for the meeting and must be delivered to members of the Council at least three clear working days before the meeting to which it relates.
- b) The agenda shall be delivered to the those borough and county councillors relating to the Parish, together with others as might be appropriate.
- c) Distribution of agendas will normally be by email, where this is possible.

13 Admission of The Public and Press to Meetings

- a) The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council, which may, however, temporarily exclude the public and press by means of the following resolution:-
"That in view of the [special] [confidential] nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw". The Council shall state the special reason for exclusion.
- b). At all meetings of the Council the Chairman may allow any members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being discussed at that time. This would normally be after the Council has had the opportunity to discuss the matter concerned and after the Chairman has invited comments from the floor.
- c) If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, without good reason, the Chairman may, after warning, order that he be removed from the meeting and may adjourn the meeting for such period as is necessary to restore order.

14. Liaison with County and Borough Councillors

- a) At the beginning of each term of office for the Parish's county and borough councillors an invitation to attend the Parish Council meetings shall be sent to such councillors.
- b) An Agenda for each meeting shall be sent to them as and when such agenda is sent to the Parish Councillors. Similarly, copies of the minutes will be sent as and when these are distributed. All communications will be sent, where possible, by email.

16. Standing Orders to be Given to Members

A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each member by the Clerk upon delivery to him of the member's Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

These Standing Orders and Financial Instructions were adopted, as amended, by Lindal and Marton Parish Council at its held on Thursday, 6th October 2022.