

## **Standing Orders for Hartford Parish Council**

### **1 COUNCIL MEETINGS**

#### **1.1 Chairing meetings**

The Chair of the Council or in her /his absence the Deputy Chair shall chair meetings of the Council. In their absence the Council shall select a person to chair the meeting.

#### **1.2 Quorum**

No business shall be dealt with unless there is a quorum of 4 members present. If there is no quorum, the meeting must be adjourned immediately.

#### **1.3 Holding meetings**

1.3.1 An annual meeting of the Council shall be held in every year in the month of May. 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.

1.3.2 The Council will meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month with the exception of August when there is no meeting.

1.3.3 An extraordinary meeting of the Council may be called at any time by the chair.

1.3.4 Any 2 members may submit a written request signed by them to the Chair to call an extraordinary meeting. In the event of the Chair not calling an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of receiving the request, or refusing to call an extraordinary meeting, the 2 members may call an extraordinary meeting.

1.3.5 Meetings shall be held at a place, date and time fixed by the Council. Meetings shall not be held in premises being used at the time for the supply of alcohol permitted by the Licensing Act 2003 unless no other suitable room is available.

1.3.6 Notice of the time and place of meetings must be fixed in a conspicuous place in the parish at least 3 clear days before the meeting. Where a meeting is called by members of the Council (1.3.4 above), the notice shall be signed by those members and shall specify the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting (the agenda).

1.3.7 All members of the Council shall be given (by email) at least 3 clear days written notice of all meetings of the Council from the Proper Officer specifying the business proposed to be transacted (the agenda).

#### **1.4 Order of business for Annual Meetings**

1.4.1 At Annual Meetings business will be dealt with in the following order:

Election of Chair (This will be followed immediately by the Chair's declaration of acceptance of office)

Election of Deputy Chair

When the Annual Meeting follows Council elections, to note the receipt of declarations of acceptance of office by members

Disclosures of interest by members (and employees) in items on the agenda

Agreeing the minutes of the last meeting and signing them

Receiving any apologies for absence

Announcements from the Chair

To approve any changes to the Standing Orders proposed following the annual review

To approve any changes to the delegation arrangements proposed following the annual review  
To approve any changes to other governing documents  
To appoint committees  
To make appointments and nominations  
Deciding the dates, times and place of meetings of the Council for the year  
To receive recommendations from committees  
Other business placed on the agenda

## **1.5 Order of business for ordinary meetings**

1.5.1 At ordinary meetings, business will usually be dealt with in the following order:

Disclosures of interest by members (and employees) in items on the agenda  
Agreeing the minutes of the last meeting and signing them  
Receiving any apologies for absence  
Announcements from the Chair  
Receiving petitions  
Public question time  
Any business remaining from previous meetings  
Any appointments to committees and other bodies  
To receive recommendations from committees  
To receive business motions from members  
Other business placed on the agenda

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

1.5.3 A resolution of the Council shall not be reversed within six months save by special resolution carried by a two thirds majority of those present and voting

1.5.4 When such a special resolution has been disposed of, no similar resolution may be moved for a further six months.

## **1.6 Minutes**

1.6.1 No discussion shall take place on a motion to agree the minutes other than upon their accuracy.

1.6.2 Any corrections shall be made by moving that the minutes are agreed with the corrections stated.

1.6.3 The minutes must record the names of members present at the meeting and the declarations of interest of any member.

1.6.4 The minutes of a meeting must be circulated to all members as soon as practicable and referred to the next meeting (other than an extraordinary meeting) for agreement and signing by the Chair.

## **1.7 Petitions**

1.7.1 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 10 electors within the parish.

1.7.2 Petitions may only be about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the parish.

1.7.3 Petitions will not be received by the Council which are in furtherance of a person's individual circumstances or which are about a matter where there is a right of appeal to the courts, a tribunal or government minister.

- 1.7.4 A petition will not be received by the Council where the issue it concerns has been the subject of a petition in the last six months or a decision of the Council in the last six months.
- 1.7.5 One signatory to the petition may speak on the petition for no more than 5 minutes.
- 1.7.6 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.
- 1.7.7 No more than 5 petitions will be received at a meeting.

## **1.8 Public Question time**

- 1.8.1 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.
- 1.8.2 An elector seeking a response to a question at the meeting must give the clerk notice of the question at least 5 clear days before the meeting.
- 1.8.3 Questions will not be received by the Council which are in furtherance of a person's individual circumstances or which are about a matter where there is a right of appeal to the courts, a tribunal or government minister.
- 1.8.4 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 6 months.
- 1.8.5 An elector putting a question may speak for no more than three minutes.
- 1.8.6 A maximum of 15 minutes will be allowed for public questions unless otherwise decided by the Chair
- 1.8.7 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.
- 1.8.8 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.
- 1.8.9 The public and press are entitled to be present at all Council meetings and committee meetings. The public and press may be excluding by means of a special 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 public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw".
- 1.8.10 The public are not entitled to take part in a Council meeting or a committee meeting, but may be permitted to do so. Such participation shall be limited to a total of 20 minutes and shall only take place after participation has been approved by resolution of the Council.
- 1.8.11 If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chairman may, after warning, order that he/she be removed from the Council Chamber.

## **1.9 Recommendations of committees**

- 1.9.1 The usual order for considering recommendations of committees will be:  
Finance Committee  
Planning Committee
- 1.9.2 The order may be changed by the meeting by motion put by the chair where this is conducive to the efficient conduct of business.
- 1.9.3 Recommendations of committees must be included in full on the agenda for the Council meeting. Recommendations of committees meeting after the notice of meeting has been sent to members must be circulated to all members as soon as practical.
- 1.9.4 Recommendations cannot be discussed until they have been moved and seconded. This will normally be done by the chair and deputy chair of the committee.
- 1.9.5 Normally only one recommendation may be discussed at a time, but the Chair may allow 2 or more recommendations to be discussed together where this is conducive to the efficient conduct of business.

## **1.10 Voting**

- 1.10.1 Subject to any legal requirement all questions to be decided by the Council shall be decided by a majority of the members present and voting.
- 1.10.2 Members shall vote by show of hands. A member's vote will only be counted if the member is in the room of the meeting at the time the vote is taken.
- 1.10.3 Immediately after a vote is taken and before the next business is commenced, a member may request that the minutes of the meeting record the way in which the member has voted or that the member abstained from voting. The minutes shall note whether the member voted for or against the question put or whether the member abstained.
- 1.10.4 Immediately before a vote is taken any member may request that a vote is recorded. When a request is made the Chair or person nominated by the Chair shall call the names of all the members and after each name is called the member shall state whether s/he is voting for or against the question put or abstaining. The record of voting shall be recorded in the minutes.
- 1.10.5 In the case of an equality of votes the Chair may give a casting vote whether or not s/he gave a first vote.
- 1.10.6 The Chair must give a casting vote in the event of there being an equality of votes for the election of the Chair of the Council.
- 1.10.7 A resolution of the Council shall not be reversed within six months save by special resolution carried by a two thirds majority of those present and voting.
- 1.10.8 When such a special resolution has been disposed of, no similar resolutions may be moved for a further 6 months.

## **1.11 Procedural motions**

- 1.11.1 Any member at any time may move, between speakers, any of the following motions:
- To proceed to the next business
  - To move to the vote
  - To refer a matter to a committee
  - To adjourn the meeting

If the motion is seconded, it must be put to the vote immediately without discussion.

## **1.12 Conduct**

- 1.12.1 Members must behave in a way that is conducive to the efficient conduct of business and respect the role of the Chair in the proper management of the meeting.
- 1.12.2 If a member persistently disregards the ruling of the Chair by behaving improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructing business, the Chair may move that the member be not further heard. If the motion is seconded, it must be put to the vote immediately without discussion.
- 1.12.3 If the member continues to behave improperly after a motion that the member be not further heard, the Chair may move that either the member leaves the meeting or that the meeting is adjourned for a specified period. If the motion is seconded, it must be put to the vote immediately without discussion.
- 1.12.4 If there is a general disturbance at the meeting involving any person present, making the orderly conduct of business impractical, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for as long as s/he considers necessary.

## **2 COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

### **2.1 Chairing meetings**

- 2.1.1 Every committee shall at its first meeting following the Annual Meeting of the Council, before conducting any business, elect a chair for the year. A committee may elect a deputy chair.
- 2.1.2 The chair of the committee, or in her/his absence the deputy chair, will chair meetings of the committee. In their absence, the committee shall select a person to chair the meeting.

### **2.2 Quorum**

- 2.2.1 No business shall be dealt with unless the committee is quorate.
- 2.2.2 If there is no quorum the meeting must be adjourned immediately.

### **2.3 Holding meetings**

- 2.3.1 The clerk will call the first meeting of the committee following consultation with the chair.
- 2.3.2 Subsequent meetings shall be held at a place, date and time fixed by the committee. Meetings shall not be held in premises being used at the time for the supply of alcohol permitted by the Licensing Act 2003 unless no other suitable room is available.
- 2.3.3 Notice of the time and place of meetings must be fixed in a conspicuous place in the parish at least 3 clear days before the meeting.
- 2.3.4 All members of the Council shall be given (by email) at least 3 clear days written notice of all meetings of a committee from the Clerk specifying the business proposed to be transacted (the agenda).

### **2.4 Order of business**

- 2.4.1 Business will usually be dealt with in the following order:

Disclosures of interest by members (and employees) in items on the agenda  
Agreeing the minutes of the last meeting and signing

Receiving any apologies for absence  
Announcements from the Chair  
Any business remaining from previous meetings  
Other business placed on the agenda

## **2.5 Voting**

- 2.5.1 Subject to any legal requirement all questions to be decided by a committee shall be decided by a majority of the members present and voting.
- 2.5.2 Members shall vote by show of hands. A member's vote will only be counted if the member is in the room of the meeting at the time the vote is taken.
- 2.5.3 Immediately after a vote is taken and before the next business is commenced, a member may request that the minutes of the meeting record the way in which the member has voted or that the member abstained from voting. The minutes shall note whether the member voted for or against the question put or whether the member abstained.
- 2.5.4 In the case of an equality of votes the Chair may give a casting vote whether or not s/he gave a first vote.

## **2.6 Attendance by members**

- 2.6.1 Any member not being a member of a committee may attend any meeting of the committee.
- 2.6.2 The chair may permit any such member to speak.

## **3 OTHER PROVISIONS**

### **3.1 Smoking**

- 3.1.1 Smoking is prohibited during any Council and committee meeting.

### **3.2 Individual members**

- 3.2.1 A member cannot individually exercise any functions of the Council on behalf of the Council. A member must not issue any order relating to work being done for the Council or claim any right to enter any property on behalf of the Council.

## **APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND DELEGATIONS**

The Parish Council will appoint the following Committees with composition, quorum and role and functions indicated:

### **Finance Committee**

The Committee will comprise 5 members.

The quorum of the Committee shall be 3 members.

The Committee shall undertake the following role and functions:

- To determine all the resource requirements of the Council and make recommendations to the Council. Resources include financial, land and property and employees and contractors.
- To recommend to the Council an annual budget and precept.
- To regularly monitor income and expenditure and to make any recommendations to the Council.
- To incur and authorise expenditure not otherwise delegated to another committee or employee.

## **Delegation to employees**

### **The Parish Clerk**

1. The Clerk shall be the proper officer for all proper officer functions.
2. The Clerk shall manage all employees of the Council and has the authority to take disciplinary action under agreed procedures.
3. The Clerk shall make arrangements to pay salaries and wages to all employees of the Council.
4. The Clerk shall arrange and call meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees in consultation with the relevant chair.
5. The Clerk shall carry out and implement any Council, committee or sub-committee decision.
6. The Clerk may take urgent decisions on behalf of the Council in consultation with the Chair and/or another member(s).
7. The Clerk shall respond to planning applications on behalf of the Council in consultation with members of council.

## **ACCESS TO INFORMATION ARRANGEMENTS**

### **1. Access to meetings**

- 1.1 The public and press are entitled to attend any meeting of the Council or any committee unless excluded by formal resolution in relation to any matter of business.
- 1.2 Notice of all meetings and agenda for meetings will be placed on the noticeboards on The Green and Hartford Village Hall at least 3 clear days before the meeting. Agenda for meetings will also be put on the Parish Council website.
- 1.3 The public may put questions and/or make comments to meetings of the Parish Council in accordance with Standing Orders
- 1.4 Petitions may be presented to meetings of the parish Council in accordance with Standing Orders
- 1.5 The taking of photographs and video and sound recording by any person at any meeting may only be done with the permission of the Council or committee.

### **2. Access to documents**

- 2.1 A reasonable number of copies of agendas shall be available for the public attending meetings from the Clerk.
- 2.2 Minutes of meetings shall be available free to the public on application to the Clerk. (Bulk and multiple applications may be subject to a copying charge.)
- 2.3 Agreed minutes shall be available at Hartford Village Hall and on the Parish Council's website.
- 2.4 A reasonable number of open reports submitted to meetings of the Council and committees shall be available for the public attending meetings from the Clerk.
- 2.5 Open reports may subsequently be obtained by the public on application to the Clerk. (A copying charge may be applied)
- 2.6 Applications under the Freedom of Information Act should be addressed to the Clerk.
- 2.7 Applications for personal information under the Data Protection Act 1998 should be addressed to the Clerk.