

Henfield Parish Council Standing Orders

**Adopted by Henfield Parish Council on 3rd December 2013
(Last amended – 3rd May 2016)**

Index of Standing Orders

Order:		Page No.
1	Meetings generally	2
2	Ordinary full council meetings	4
3	Committees and sub-committees	5
4	Extraordinary meetings of council, committees and sub committees	7
5	Rules of debate at meeting	7
6	Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer	10
7	Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice	11
8	Previous resolutions	11
9	Voting on appointments to Council	12
10	Procedure to Co-opt a new member	12
11	Disorderly conduct at meetings	12
12	Draft minutes	13
13	Handling confidential or sensitive information	13
14	Code of conduct and dispensations	13
15	Code of members conduct complaints	14
16	Canvassing of and recommendations by members	15
17	Planning Applications	15
18	Proper Officer	16
19	Responsible Financial Officer	17
20	Budget / Precept	17
21	Accounts and accounting statements	17
22	Financial controls and procurement	18
23	Handling staff matters	19
24	Requests for information	20
25	Relations with the press/media	20`
26	Execution and sealing of legal deeds	20
27	Communicating with District and County councillors	21
28	Restrictions on Council member activities	21
29	Standing orders generally	21

1 Meetings generally

- a Meetings of Henfield Parish Council shall be held in The Henfield Hall commencing at 7.00 pm unless Council otherwise decides at a previous meeting. **These Meetings shall not take place when at the time of the meeting the premises are used for the supply of alcohol, unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.**
- b **A minimum of three clear days for notice of a full Council meeting shall be given. This does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, and Bank Holiday breaks (to include Christmas and Easter) or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **A minimum of three clear days' public notice for a committee meeting shall be given. This does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless an extraordinary meeting is convened at shorter notice.**
- d **All meetings of full Council and committees shall be open to the public and press 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 a resolution** namely: *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 from the meeting.*
- e Members of the public may make representations, question and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 1(e) above shall not exceed 30 minutes unless directed otherwise by the Chairman of the meeting.
- g Subject to standing order 1(f) above, a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes unless directed otherwise by the Chairman of the meeting.
- h In accordance with standing order 1(e) above, a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The Chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person who speaks at a meeting of the Council shall direct his/her comments to the Chairman.
- j Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the Chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.

- k The Parish Council respects the right of the public to film and record meetings but expects this to be carried out without any disruption or inconvenience to others attending the meeting.
- l **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- m **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his/her absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council** and this shall also apply to Committees and sub Committees of Council.
- n **The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman, if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, another member as chosen by the members present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- o **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the members with voting rights present and voting.**
- p **The Chairman 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 his/her casting vote whether or not he/she gave an original vote.**
(Different rules apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council – see standing order 2(i) and 2(j) below).
- q **Unless at least 2 members of council request a signed paper ballot (see standing order 1 r), voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a member, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each member present and voting gave his/her vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- r Where at least two members of council so request, voting shall be by means of a signed paper ballot
- s 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 members present;
iii. interests that have been declared by members and non-council members with voting rights;
iv. whether a member or non-member with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
v. if there was a public participation session; and
vi. the resolutions made.

- t **A member or a non-member 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 a statutory limitation or restriction under the code on his/her right to participate and vote on that matter**
- u **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**
(See standing order 3(d) vi for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting).
- v **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.

2 Ordinary full council 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 members elected take office.**
- b. **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.**
- c. **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d. **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year in the months of March, September and December on such dates and times as the Council directs.**
- e. Eight additional meetings in addition to those referred to in Standing Orders 2 (a)(b)(d) shall be held in each year in the months of January, February, April, June, July, August, October and November on such dates as the Council may direct.
- f. **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if any) of the Council.**
- g. **The Chairman of the Council, unless he/she has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his/her successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h. **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless he/she resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- i. **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he/she shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council**

shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

- j. In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he/she shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He/she may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- k No person shall be elected Chairman of Council for more than six years in succession.
- l Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman (if any) of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the business of the annual meeting shall include:
 - i. In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and members of Council of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
 - iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
 - iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
 - v. Appointment of members to existing committees;
 - vi. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 3 below;
 - vii. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;

3 Committees and sub committees

- a Unless Council determines otherwise a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b The members of a committee may include non-council members unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-council members.**
- d The council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall permit a committee to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iii. shall not appoint any member to hold office for a period later than the next annual meeting of council.

- iv. may, subject to standing orders 3(b) and 3(c) above, appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer before the meeting that they are unable to attend.
 - v. shall permit a committee including a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman and vice chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
 - vi. may determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee, but shall be no less than three;
 - vii. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
 - viii. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee.
 - ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
 - x. may dissolve a committee.
- e Where Council appoints a standing committee for finance and general purpose, membership of that committee shall comprise the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of Council and Chairmen of the other appointed standing committees, except that where a committee Chairman is absent the respective committee's Vice Chairman may attend as a voting member of the committee.
 - f Where Council appoints a standing committee for finance and general purpose, the Vice Chairman of Council shall be appointed chairman of that committee.
 - g Subject to Standing Order 2(f) every committee shall at its first meeting after the annual meeting of Council, before proceeding with any other business, elect a chairman and a vice chairman who shall hold office until the next annual meeting of Council.
 - h No person shall be elected chairman of a standing committee for more than six years in succession.
 - i The Chairman and Vice Chairman of Council ex officio, shall be voting members of every standing committee

4 Extraordinary meetings of the Council and committees and sub-committees

- a The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**

- b **If the Chairman of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two members, any two members may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two members.**
- c The chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or the sub-committee] at any time.
- d If the chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested by to do so by two members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any two members of the committee [and the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee [and a sub-committee].

5 Rules of debate at meetings

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chairman of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed 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 Chairman 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 If the subject matter of a motion comes within the province of a committee of the Council, it shall, upon being moved and seconded, stand referred without discussion to such committee or to such other committee as the Council may determine for report. The Chairman if he/she considers it to be a matter of urgency, may allow it to be dealt with at the meeting at which it is moved.
- f Any member who has proposed a resolution which has been referred to any committee of which he/she is not a member, may explain the motion to the committee but shall not vote.
- g If a motion (which is moved otherwise than in pursuance of a recommendation of the Finance and General Purposes Committee or of another committee after recommendation by the Finance and General Purposes Committee) and which, if carried would, in the opinion of the Chairman, substantially increase the expenditure upon any service which is under the management of the Council or reduce the revenue at the disposal of any committee, or which would involve capital expenditure,

shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council, and any committee affected by it shall consider whether it desires to report thereon (and the Finance and General Purposes Committee shall report on the financial aspect of the matter).

- h An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- i If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- j An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the Chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the Chairman.
- k A member may move an amendment to his/her 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.
- l If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairman.
- m Subject to standing order 5(n) below, only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chairman of the meeting.
- n One or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- o A member may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- p The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- q 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 debate of the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- r Unless permitted by the Chairman of the meeting, a member may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another member;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he/she last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. in exercise of a right of reply.

- s During the debate of a motion, a member may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the member who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A member raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which he/she considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he/she is concerned by.
- t A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- u 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 a 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; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory requirements.
- v Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the Chairman 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 his/her right of reply.
- w Excluding motions moved under standing order 5(u) above, the contributions or speeches by a member shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed 10 minutes by the mover of the motion and five minutes by any other member without the consent of the Chairman of the meeting.
- x At the end of any speech a member may, without comment, move “that the motion be now put”, “that the debate be now adjourned” or “that the council do now adjourn”. If such motion is seconded the Chairman shall put the motion, but in the case of a motion “that the motion be now put” only if he/she is of the opinion that the motion before the Council has been sufficiently debated. If the motion “that the motion be now put” is carried he/she shall call upon the mover to exercise or waive his/her right of reply and shall put the motion immediately after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the Council shall not prejudice the mover’s right of reply at the resumption.

6 Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting which it is tabled for and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least three clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 6(b) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 6(b) above is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Proper Officer so that it can be understood at least three clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the members who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- f Subject to standing order 6(e) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded in a book for that purpose and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded in a book for that purpose with an explanation by the Proper Officer for their rejection.

7 Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
 - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
 - ii. to move to a vote;
 - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;

- iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
- v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
- vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;
- vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
- viii. to require a written report;
- ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
- x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
- xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or sensitive information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
- xii. to not hear further from a member of Council or a member of the public;
- xiii. to exclude a member of Council or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
- xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
- xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory requirements);
- xvi. to seal a document on behalf of Council;
- xvii. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xviii. to close a meeting.

8 Previous resolutions

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least two members to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 6 above, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 8(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

9 Voting on appointments to Council

- a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person 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 person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

10 Procedure to Co-opt a new member

- a **Where no poll is claimed to fill a vacancy for a member on Council, if the period of vacancy has six months or more to run, the Council shall, by co-option, fill the vacancy as soon as practicable. If the period of vacancy is for less than six months, the Council shall decide whether it is appropriate to fill the vacancy.**

- b Where a vacancy for a member on Council is to be filled by co-option, the vacancy shall be advertised locally by all appropriate means requiring written applications to be submitted to the Proper Officer and inviting applicants to explain in the application their present or past involvement in the life of Henfield and what the applicant can bring to the position of parish council member.
- c Co-option of a person to be a member of Council shall take place at a full Council meeting. Copies of the candidate's letter of application shall be circulated to all members of Council with the agenda for the meeting. Discussion at Council meeting shall be restricted to clarification of information within the written application.
- d **The successful candidate must receive an absolute majority vote of those members present and voting.**

11 Disorderly conduct at meetings

- a No member shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman, wilfully obstruct business, or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly or in such manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.
- b If in the opinion of the Chairman a member has broken the provisions of Order 11a (above), the Chairman shall express that opinion to the Council and name that member and thereafter any member may move that the member named be no longer heard or that the member named do leave the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.
- c If either of the motions mentioned in Order 11b (above) is disobeyed, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting or take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce the motion(s).
- d No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the Chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- e If person(s) disregard the request of the Chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any member or the Chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- f If a resolution made under standing order 11(b) above is ignored, the Chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

12 Draft minutes

- a 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 7(a) i above.
- b The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- c Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

13 Handling confidential or sensitive information

- a The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.
- b Council members and staff shall not disclose confidential or sensitive information which for special reasons would not be in the public interest.

14 Code of conduct and dispensations

(See also standing order 1(t) above).

- a All members and non-council members with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless he/she has been granted a dispensation, a member or non-council member with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He/she may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he/she had the interest.
- c Unless he/she has been granted a dispensation, a member or non-council member with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he/she has another interest if so required by the Council's code of conduct. He/she may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he/she had the interest.

- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** in accordance with the Henfield Parish Council Code of Members' Conduct – Dispensation Scheme.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by a meeting of the Council and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for 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. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to standing orders 14(d) and 14(f) above, dispensations requests shall be considered at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- h **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 14(e) above if having regard to all relevant circumstances the following applies:**
 - 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 or**
 - 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.**

15 Code of members conduct -complaints

- a Upon notification by Horsham District Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a member or non-council member with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 13, report this to the Council
- b Where the notification in standing order 15(a) above relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman 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 15(d) below.
- c The Council may:
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to progress an investigation of the complaint or is required by law;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;

- d Upon notification by Horsham District Council that a member or non-council member with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him/her. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.

16 Canvassing of and recommendations by members

- a Canvassing of members of the Council or of any committee, directly or indirectly, for an appointment under the Council shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Proper Officer shall make known the purport of the sub-paragraph of this standing order to every candidate.
- b A member of council or of any committee shall not solicit for any person any appointment under the Council or recommend any person for such appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such member may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.
- c Standing order 16 shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

17 Planning Applications

- a The Proper Officer shall, as soon as it is received, enter in a book kept for the purpose the following particulars of every planning application notified to Council:
 - i. the date on which it was received
 - ii. the name of the applicant
 - iii. the place to which it relates
- b the Proper Officer shall refer every planning application received to the Chairman of the Plans Advisory Committee or in the Chairman's absence to the Vice-Chairman and display brief details on the Parish Council noticeboard and the Council website indicating the date on which it will be considered.
- c No decision made by a Plans Advisory Committee shall be revoked or altered without the agreement of the said Committee or the Council.

18 Proper Officer

- a Where a statute, regulation or order of Council confers functions or duties on the Proper Officer of the Council it shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s)

nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.

- b The Proper Officer shall:
- i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council, a committee and a sub-committee serve on members, by delivery or post at their residences, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda.** OR
at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council, a committee and a sub-committee serve on members a summons, by email, confirming the time, place and the agenda provided any such email contains the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer.
 - ii. **give public notice of the time, place and agenda at least three clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by members is signed by them);**
 - iii. subject to standing order 6 above, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a member has given written notice at least 3 clear days before the meeting confirming his/her withdrawal of it;
 - iv. **convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his/her office;**
 - v. shall keep a minute of all Council meetings and meetings of committees and sub-committees;
 - vi. facilitate inspection of the minute of a meeting by a member of Council or by a local government elector;
 - vii. Certify copies of byelaws made by Council;
 - viii. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
 - ix. receive and retain acceptance of office forms from members;
 - x. retain a copy of every member's register of interests;
 - xi. assist with responding to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the Council's policies and procedures relating to the same;
 - xii. sign notices and other documents on behalf of Council;
 - xiii. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
 - xiv. manage the organisation, storage of, access to and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form;
 - xv. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
 - xvi. arrange or manage prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by Council in accordance with the its financial regulations;
 - xvii. manage access to information about the Council via the Council's website and other publication schemes;

19 Responsible Financial Officer

- a The Council shall appoint the Parish Clerk as the Responsible Financial Officer and

shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

20 Budget / Precept

- a The Council shall approve written income and expenditure budgets and the Council precept for the coming financial year by the end of the month of January.
- b Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give to the Responsible Financial Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than at its meeting before the end of the month of December.
- c In every year not later than the meeting at which the budget for the following financial year is settled, the Council shall review the pay and conditions of service of its existing employees.

21 Accounts and accounting statements

- a “Proper practices” in standing orders and Council’s financial regulations 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.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each member as soon as practicable after the end of each calendar month a statement to summarise:
 - i. the Council’s income and expenditure for each month;
 - ii. the Council’s aggregate income and expenditure for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held by Council at the end of the month being reported and which statement to include a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each member with a statement summarising the Council’s income and expenditure for the last financial year;
 - ii. to the full Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 1 of the annual return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and applying the form of accounts determined by the Council (income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March. The annual return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to

Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June of the following financial year to which the return applies.

22 Financial controls and procurement

- a The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection of and copying by members and local electors of the Council's accounts and
 - v. procurement policies (subject to standing order 22(c) below) including the setting of values for different procedures where a contract has an estimated value of less than £60,000.

- b Financial regulations shall be reviewed at least annually for fitness of purpose.

- c **Financial regulations shall confirm that a proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £60,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in standing order 22(d) below.**

- 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 execution of works shall be drawn up;
 - ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (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 and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting council members or staff to encourage or support 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 to be 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 at least one member after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.

- e Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- f **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed £138,893 (or other threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time) the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No. 5, as amended) and the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No. 6, as amended) apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with EU procurement rules.**

23 Handling staff matters

- a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council OR a standing committee of council is subject to standing order 13 above.
- b If at a meeting of Council or a standing committee 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 or committee (as the case may be) has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded in accordance with standing order 1(d)
- c Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council, or in his absence the Vice Chairman if he/she will be/is absent from work occasioned by illness or other reason.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's Proper Officer shall contact the Chairman of Council or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairman in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Finance and General Purposes Committee
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by an employee of Council relates to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Council, this shall be communicated to another member of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and this shall be reported back to the Committee who shall progress the matter in accordance with the Council's Grievance Policy.
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters as confidential and secure.
- g The Council shall keep all written records relating to employees secure.
- h Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records

referred to in standing orders 23(f) and 23(g) above if so justified.

24 Requests for information

- a Requests for information held by the Council shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- b Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The said Committee shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

25 Relations with the press/media

- a Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council shall in normal circumstances be referred to the Parish Clerk as the Proper Officer of the Council.

26 Execution and sealing of legal deeds

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **Subject to standing order 26(a) above, any two members may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

27 Communicating with District and County Councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of Horsham District and West Sussex County Council representing the area of the Council.
- b Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to Horsham District and West Sussex County Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.

28 Restrictions on Council member activities

- a. Unless authorised by a resolution, no member shall:
 - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

29 Standing orders generally

- a. All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements (recorded in bold print), may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b. A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 6 above.
- c. The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a member as soon as possible after he/she has delivered his acceptance of office form.
- d. The decision of the Chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.
- e. All references in these standing order to "member", means a member of Henfield Parish Council.
- f. All references in these standing order to "clerk" shall have the same meaning as references to "Proper Officer" (see Order 18)
- g. All references in these standing orders to "the Council" means Henfield Parish Council.