

**Easebourne Parish Council
Standing Orders**

1. Meetings

a) The Statutory Annual Meeting (a) in an election year shall be held on the Wednesday next following the fourth day after the ordinary day of elections to the Council and (b) in a year which is not an election year shall be held on the second Wednesday in May.

b) The three other statutory meetings shall be held on the second Wednesday in the months of July, September and November. Two additional meetings shall be held on the second Wednesday in the months of January and March.

2. Notices

a) The time, place and agenda of meetings shall be sent to all members of the council at least seven clear days before the meetings.

b) With a view to preparation of agendas, any Councillor who intends to bring forward business should send a signed, written notice to the Clerk of the Council at least TEN clear days before the Meeting. Unless this notice has been given, and the business appears on the Agenda, the Chairman should decline to receive any motion thereon.

3. Quorum

No business may be transacted at any Meeting of the Council unless four members, exclusive of the Chairman, are present. If, after 15 minutes from the advertised time of the meeting, a quorum is not present the meeting shall be adjourned until the next Ordinary Meeting of the Council and an entry made to that end in the Minute Book and signed by the Clerk.

If during a meeting the number of councillors present and not debarred by reason of a declared pecuniary interest falls below the quorum, the business not transacted at that meeting shall be transacted at the next meeting or on any such day as the Chairman may fix.

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4. 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 members who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it.**

c) **Subject to d) and e) below, the Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may give a casting vote even though he gave no original vote.**

d) **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.

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

5. Order of Business

At each Annual Meeting the first business shall be:

- a) To elect a Chairman.
- b) To receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.
- c) The office of Chairman shall not be held for a period in excess of four years with no re-election to the office until a period of two years has elapsed
- d) In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.

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- e) To decide when any declarations of acceptance of office which have not been received as provided by law shall be received.
- f) To elect a Vice-Chairman.
- g) To appoint panels.

And shall thereafter follow the order set out as listed below.

At every meeting other than the Annual Meeting the first business shall be to appoint a Chairman if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be absent and to receive such declarations of acceptance of office (if any) and undertaking to observe the Council's Code of Conduct as are required by law to be made, or if not then received to decide when they shall be received.

Business shall be taken in the order in which it is placed in the Convening Notice and the rules of debate shall be as drawn up for the guidance of the Parish Council. The decision of the Chairman on all points of order will be final. The Chairman may propose varying the order of business on ground of urgency.

- a) Declaration of Interest by Councillors on any Agenda item.
- b) To read and consider the Minutes; 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.
- c) After consideration to approve the signature of the Minutes by the person presiding as a correct record.
- d) To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.
- e) Matters arising from the Minutes.
- f) Reports of County and District Councillors, reports of panels, and Clerk's financial report.

- g) Letters to be read.
- h) To consider any motions for which due notice has been given.

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6. Rules of Debate

- a) No discussion shall take place upon the Minutes except upon their accuracy. Corrections shall be made by resolution and must be initialled by the Chairman.
- b) A resolution or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- c) When an amendment has been moved no subsequent amendment should be moved until the first amendment has been disposed of. An amendment proposed, but not seconded, will not be considered and any discussion is out of order.
- d) No member can speak twice on the same resolution or amendment. The mover of the resolution has a right to reply, but not the mover of the amendment, except by permission of the chairman, by way of explanation as to remarks being misunderstood, or misrepresented.
- e) Any Member may bring up a point of order while another is speaking, but must state his point at once, and take the Chairman's decision on it.
- f) Motions that: 'The Question now be put', 'That this meeting be adjourned', or 'That the Council proceed to the next business', may be moved at any time, and must, when seconded, be immediately put to the meeting without debate or amendment, but no second motion on the points being discussed shall be put to the Chairman at any less interval than fifteen minutes.
- g) A negative motion will not be brought up again until at least four calendar months have passed.
- h) No resolution of the Council shall be altered or rescinded at any meeting, unless the clerk has given a fortnight's notice to each member of the Council setting forth the proposed alteration. Also no resolution of the Council shall be altered unless there be two-thirds of the members present at such meeting.

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7. Admission of the Public and Press to Meetings

The public shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees, which may, however, temporarily exclude the public, if the nature of the business is special or confidential. The Clerk shall afford to the press reasonable facilities for taking their report of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present.

The public shall be given the first 10 minutes of the meeting to comment or ask questions on any Agenda item

8. Interests (England)

If a member has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 9th May 2007 then he shall declare such interest as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the existence and nature of that interest as required. The Clerk shall record the interest in a book kept for the purpose.

If a member who has declared a personal interest then considers the interest to be prejudicial, he may attend the meeting but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise. He must then withdraw from the room during consideration of the item to which the interest relates.

9. Disorderly Conduct

All members must observe the Code of Conduct which was adopted by the Council on 9th May 2007, a copy of which is annexed to these Standing Orders.

If a member reasonably believes another member is in breach of the Code of Conduct, that member is under a duty to report the breach to the Standards Board (England).

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10. Inspection of Documents – Freedom of Information

All Minutes kept by the Council and by any Committee shall be open for the inspection by any member of the Council or public.

For any point not covered in these Standing Orders, advice should be taken from: 'Standing Orders and Chairmanship', published regularly by the National Association of Local Councils

