

HORLEY TOWN COUNCIL – STANDING ORDERS

INTRODUCTION

- 1** The Standing Orders regulate the conduct and business of the Town Council and are binding on Horley Town Councillors.
- 2** The Orders are also binding on all those invited to take part in public or confidential Council business and, where appropriate, on Town Council staff.
- 3** The Orders are reviewed by the Standing Orders Sub-Committee on a regular basis. Its recommendations are considered by the Finance & General Purposes Committee, who, in turn makes recommendations to Full Council.
- 4** Where matters arise that are not covered by these Orders, reference should be made to the latest version of the publication, Local Council Administration by Charles Arnold-Baker.
- 5** Many of the Orders are statutory requirements. These are printed in bold type.
- 6** On signing or re-signing a Declaration of Acceptance of Office, members also undertake to be bound by the Reigate and Banstead Borough Council Member Code of Conduct, adopted by Horley Town Council on 26 June 2012, with effect from 1 July 2012, in accordance with Chapter 7, Regulation 28 of the Localism Act 2011. A copy of is appended (reference Appendix A).
- 7** The Financial Regulations govern the financial conduct of the Town Council
- 8** Further background details can be found in the Supplementary Information section
- 9** The Complaints Procedures govern the Town Council's procedures for dealing with complaints from a service user or from a member of the public
- 10** The Press & Media Protocol guides both Councillors and Officers in their relations with the Press and Media.
- 11** The Social Networking Policy manages and regulates the corporate use of social media alongside the Press & Media Protocol.

These Orders were considered at the Full Council Meeting of 5 April 2016

STANDING ORDERS 2016

Meetings

- 1 Meetings of the Council shall be held in each year on such dates and times and at such place as the Council may direct.
- 2 **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 a reasonable cost.**
- 3 **When calculating the 3 clear days for notice of a meeting to councillors and the public, the day on which 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 shall not count.**
- 4 **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 a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**
- 5 Subject to the above standing order, members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included on the agenda.
- 6 Subject to the above standing order, each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than five minutes. The Chairman may seek further clarification from members of the public, where necessary.
- 7 In accordance with the above standing order, the Chairman may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to an officer for a written or oral response.
- 8 A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- 9 At the discretion of a simple majority of the Council or Committee, members of the public, by reason of their expertise, may be invited to participate in public or confidential sessions.
- 10 **Members of the public, including citizens and professional journalists, may use modern technology and communication methods such as filming, audio-recording, blogging and tweeting to report the proceedings of meetings, for which reasonable facilities shall be provided. Mobile telephones shall be switched off or set to silent.**
- 11 The Council shall make an audio recording of every meeting for its own use.

- 12 A member shall stand when speaking at Full Council meetings but shall remain seated when speaking at Committee meetings.
- 13 Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Chairman. Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chairman shall direct the order of speaking.
- 14 **Anything authorised or required to be done by or before the Chairman may in his absence be done by or before the Vice-Chairman.**
- 15 **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, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- 16 **All questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.**
- 17 **The Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**
- 18 **Voting on any 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 his vote for or against that question.**
- 19 **The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent.**
- 20 If prior to a meeting, a Councillor has submitted reasons for his absence at the meeting which is then approved by a resolution, such resolution shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 21 **The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council (Reigate & Banstead Member Code of Conduct, adopted by Horley Town Council from 1 July 2012) shall apply to Councillors in respect of the entire meeting.**
- 22 **An interest arising from the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council, the existence and nature of which is required to be disclosed by a Councillor at a meeting, shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.**
- 23 **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one third of the whole number of members of the Council or Committee are present and in no case shall the quorum of the meeting be less than 3.**
- 24 **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted**

- 25 A Schedule of Council and Committee Meetings for the next Council year (May to April) shall be drawn up by the Clerk and approved by the Council before the end of April in any year. The schedule shall include a date for the Annual Meeting in the next Council year. In an election year the schedule shall be recommended for approval by the incoming Council.
- 26 The Town Meeting shall be held between 1 March and 1 June each year. In an election year the Town Meeting shall be held in March.
- 27 Meetings of the Council and of its Committees shall not exceed two hours. If there is unfinished business, this Standing Order may be suspended at the discretion of a simple majority of the Council or Committee, to allow the meeting to continue. (Subject to the agreement of officers present.)

Council Meetings

- 28 **In an election year the Annual Council Meeting shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office.**
- 29 **In a year which is not an election year the Annual Council Meeting shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.**
- 30 **If no other time is fixed, the Annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- 31 **In addition to the Statutory Annual Council Meeting, at least three other statutory meetings shall be held in each year, on such dates and times and at such place as the Council may direct.**
- 32 **The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council shall be the first business completed at the Annual meeting of the Council.**
- 33 **The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- 34 **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, unless he 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.**
- 35 If the Chairman of the Council resigns or becomes disqualified, the Vice-Chairman shall assume the role of Chairman of the Council until such times as a new Chairman is elected.
- 36 **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he 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.

- 37 In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He 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.
- 38 Following the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (plus receipt of the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office), the order of business at the Annual Meeting of the Council shall include the following:
- a) Receipt of Members' Declarations of Acceptance of Office and Undertakings to observe the Reigate and Banstead Member Code of Conduct, as adopted by Horley Town Council from 1 July 2012. (In an Election Year only.)
 - b) Receipt of Members' Notification of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (in an Election Year) or any amendments thereto.
 - c) Consideration of Vacancies left unfilled by Reason of Insufficient nominations. (In an Election Year only.)
 - d) Confirmation of Inspection of Town Council Deeds and Trust Instruments
 - e) Appointment of members to standing committees. (Committee Chairmen to be appointed at the first meeting of each Committee in the Municipal Year.)
 - f) Review of sub-committees and outside bodies.
 - g) Appointment of members to sub-committees reporting to Full Council. (Appointments to sub-committees reporting to Committees to be made at respective Committee meetings.)
 - h) Approval of Full Council Minutes and receipt of Committee minutes.
 - i) General Power of Competence – to reaffirm eligibility (in an election year only).

Proper Officer

- 39 The Council's Proper Officer shall be either (i) the Clerk or such other employee as may be nominated by the Council from time to time or (ii) such other employee appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence.

- 40 The Proper Officer shall sign and serve on Councillors, either by e-mail or by delivery to their place of residence, a summons confirming the time, date, venue and agenda of a meeting of the Council or its Committees, provided that any such e-mail contains the electronic signature and title of the proper officer.**
- 41 The Proper Officer shall give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or its Committees (provided that the public notice with agenda of an Extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by Councillors is signed by them).**
- 42 The Proper Officer shall convene a meeting of Full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office.**
- 43 The Proper Officer shall make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.
- 44 The Proper Officer shall receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
- 45 The Proper Officer shall receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from Councillors.**
- 46 The Proper Officer shall retain a copy of every Councillor's Notification of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection, as well as making the information available on the Town Council website.
- 47 The Proper Officer shall process all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the Council's procedures relating to the same.
- 48 The Proper Officer shall receive and send correspondence on behalf of the Council and action or undertake any activity instructed by resolution.
- 49 The Proper Officer shall arrange for legal deeds to be signed by two Councillors and witnessed.
- 50 The Proper Officer shall arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- 51 The Proper Officer shall keep electronic records of every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the Local Planning Authority.

Agenda for Meetings

- 52 Agenda for meetings shall be drawn up by the Clerk in consultation with the Council or Committee Chairman. Any Councillor may submit items for inclusion on the agenda at least seven business days before the meeting.

Resolutions Moved On Notice

- 53 Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no resolution may be moved unless the business to which it relates has been put on the Agenda by the Clerk or the mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Clerk at least seven clear business days before the next meeting of the Council.
- 54 The Clerk shall insert in the agenda for every meeting all notices of motion or recommendation, unless the member giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that he intends to move it at some later meeting or he withdraws it.
- 55 If a resolution or recommendation specified in the agenda is not moved either by the member who gave notice of it or by any other member, it shall, unless postponed by the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.
- 56 If the subject matter of a resolution comes within the province of a committee of the Council, it shall, upon being moved and seconded, stand referred without discussion to such committee, provided that the Chairman, if he considers it to be a matter of urgency, may allow the matter to be dealt with at the meeting at which it was moved.
- 57 Every resolution or recommendation shall be relevant to some subject over which the Council has power or duties.

Resolutions Moved Without Notice

- 58 Resolutions dealing with the following matters may be moved without notice:-
- a) To appoint a Chairman of the meeting.
 - b) To correct the Minutes.
 - c) To approve the Minutes.
 - d) To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
 - e) To proceed to the next business.
 - f) To close or adjourn the debate.
 - g) To refer a matter to a committee.
 - h) To appoint a committee or any members thereof.
 - i) To adopt a report.
 - j) To amend a motion.
 - k) To give leave to withdraw a resolution or amendment.
 - l) To extend the time limit for speeches.
 - m) To exclude the press and public.
 - n) To silence or eject from the meeting a member named for misconduct.

- o) To give the consent of the Council where such consent is required by these Standing Orders.
- p) To suspend any Standing Order except those which are mandatory by law.**
- q) To adjourn the meeting.
- r) To move an item to Confidential Session.

Unforeseen Business of an Urgent Nature

- 59 If there is genuinely urgent business, this shall be noted at the close of the meeting and placed on the next appropriate agenda.

Rules of Debate

- 60 A resolution or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded, and, unless proper notice has already been given.
- 61 A member shall direct his speech to the question under discussion or to a point of order.
- 62 No speech by a mover of a resolution shall exceed five minutes and no other speech shall exceed three minutes, except by consent of the Council.
- 63 An amendment shall be either:-
- a) To leave out words.
 - b) To leave out words and insert others.
 - c) To insert or add words.
- 64 An amendment shall not have the effect of negating the resolution before the Council.
- 65 If an amendment is carried, the resolution, as amended, shall take the place of the original resolution and shall become the resolution upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- 66 A further amendment shall not be moved until the Council has disposed of the current amendment.
- 67 The mover of a resolution or of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding three minutes.
- 68 A member, other than the mover of a resolution, shall not, without leave of the Council, speak more than once on any resolution except to move an amendment or further amendment, or on a point of order, or in personal explanation, or to move a closure.

- 69 A member may speak on a point of order or a personal explanation. A member speaking for these purposes shall be heard forthwith. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by him, which may have been misunderstood.
- 70 A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the consent of the Council, which shall be signified without discussion, and no member may speak upon it after permission has been asked for its withdrawal, unless such permission has been refused.
- 71 When a resolution is under debate no other resolution shall be moved except the following:-
- a) to amend the resolution.
 - b) to proceed to the next business.
 - c) to adjourn the debate.
 - d) to put the motion to a vote.
 - e) to ask a person to be silent or for him to leave the meeting.
 - f) to refer a motion to a Committee for consideration.
 - g) to exclude the public and press
 - h) to adjourn the meeting.
 - i) to suspend any standing order, except those which are mandatory.
- 72 Members shall address the Chairman. If two or more members wish to speak, the Chairman shall decide who to call upon.
- 73 Whenever the Chairman speaks during a debate all other members shall be silent.
- 74 The mover of a resolution shall have a right to reply immediately before the resolution is put to the vote. If an amendment is proposed the mover of the amendment shall be entitled to reply immediately before the amendment is put to the vote. A member exercising a right of reply shall not introduce a new matter. After the right of reply has been exercised or waived, a vote shall be taken without further discussion.
- 75 A member may, with the consent of his seconder, move amendments to his own resolution.
- 76 The Chairman shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote. The Chairman shall call upon the mover of the motion under debate to exercise or waive his right of reply and shall put the motion to the vote after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the meeting shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

Code of Conduct

- 77 **All Councillors shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.** (The Reigate and Banstead Borough Council Member Code of Conduct, adopted by Horley Town Council from 1 July 2012, is appended to these Orders, reference Appendix A)
- 78 Members are advised to undertake training in the Code of Conduct within six months of the delivery of their Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Minutes

- 79 No discussion of the Minutes shall take place except upon their accuracy.
- 80 Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, 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.
- 81 Upon a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, any previous draft minutes or recordings of the meeting shall be destroyed.

Disorderly Conduct

- 82 No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly.
- 83 If, in the opinion of the Chairman, there has been a breach of the above standing order, the Chairman shall express that opinion and thereafter any Councillor (including the Chairman) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.
- 84 If a resolution made in accordance with the above standing order is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or he may adjourn the meeting.

Rescission of Previous Resolution

- 85 A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least six members of the Council, or by a resolution moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- 86 When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to the above standing order has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further six months.

Voting On Appointments

- 87 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 outright 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. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

Expenditure

- 88 Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.
- 89 **The Council's Financial Regulations shall be reviewed annually.**
- 90 **The Council's Financial Regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee, sub-committee or to an employee.**

Execution of Legal Deeds

- 91 A Legal Deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution.
- 92 **In accordance with a resolution made under the above standing order, 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.**

Committees and Sub-Committees

(refer also to Supplementary Information, Appendix D)

- 93 The Council may at its Annual Meeting appoint standing committees (currently Finance & General Purposes, Leisure & Amenities and Planning & Development) and may at any other time appoint such other committees as may be necessary, and:
- a) shall determine their terms of reference
 - b) shall not appoint any member of a committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting.
 - c) may dissolve or alter the membership of a committee at any time, in accordance with standing orders.
- 94 With the exception of Committee Chairmen, each member shall have the opportunity to serve on a maximum of two committees.
- 95 The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council, ex-officio, shall be voting members of every committee.

- 96 The Chairman of the Leisure & Amenities Committee and the Chairman of the Planning & Development Committee shall be ex officio members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
- 97 Committee Chairmen shall have the opportunity to serve on all three committees.
- 98 Unless there is a Council resolution to the contrary, every committee may appoint sub-committees, whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by resolution of the committee.
- 99 Every committee / sub-committee shall at its first meeting, before proceeding to any other business, elect a Chairman and may elect a Vice-Chairman who shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the council.
- 100 The Standing Orders relating to meetings of committees shall apply to meetings of sub-committees.

Working Parties

- 101 The Council or its Committees may create working parties, as necessary, to carry out specific tasks and make recommendations to the body by which they were established.

Advisory Committees

- 102 The Council or its Committees may appoint advisory committees comprising a number of councillors and non-councillors.

Leaders' Group

- 103 The Leaders' Group (comprising all Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen) shall authorise expenditure and take decisions of an essential / emergency nature, for later ratification at the appropriate meeting.

Presence of Non-Members at Committee and Sub-Committee Meetings

- 104 Any member may attend a meeting of a committee, of which he is not a member and may speak, with the permission of the Chairman, but shall not be allowed to vote. Members shall be allowed to attend meetings of sub-committees, of which they are not members, with the exception of the Staff Sub-Committee and the Awards Sub-Committee.

Extraordinary Meetings

- 105 The Chairman of the Council may convene an Extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**

106 The Chairman of a committee may convene an Extraordinary meeting of the committee at any time.

107 If the Chairman of the Council or a committee 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 or committee. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.

108 At least three days' notice shall be given for any Extraordinary meeting. The agenda shall set out the business to be considered at the meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.

109 If the meeting is called by members, the statutory notice of the meeting must be signed by the members concerned and the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting must be specified.

Accounts and Financial Statement

110 All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Council's financial regulations, which shall be reviewed annually.

111 The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor monthly statements summarising the Council's receipts and payments and balances held.

112 A Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis (income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March shall be presented to each councillor before the end of the following month of May. The Statement of Accounts of the Council (which is subject to external audit), including the Annual Governance Statement, shall be presented to Council for formal approval before 30 June.

Estimates / Precepts

113 **The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year** at its meeting before the end of January.

114 Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Clerk a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than November.

Canvassing of and Recommendations by Councillors

115 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 of this standing order to every candidate.

- 116 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 for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such person may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.
- 117 This standing order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

Inspection of Documents

- 118 Subject to standing orders to the contrary or in respect of matters which are confidential, a councillor may, for the purpose of his official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee or a sub-committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its committees or sub-committees shall be available for inspection by councillors.

Unauthorised Activities

- 119 Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee:
- a) inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect or
 - b) issue orders, instructions or directions.

Confidential Business

- 120 Councillors shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware is of a confidential nature.
- 121 Any member in breach of the provisions of the above Standing Order may be removed from a committee or sub-committee by a resolution of the Council.

General Power of Competence

- 122 Before exercising the General Power of Competence, a meeting of the Full Council shall have passed a resolution to confirm it has satisfied the prescribed statutory criteria required to qualify as an eligible parish council.**
- 123 The Council's period of eligibility begins on the date that the resolution made under the above standing order was passed and expires on the day of the annual meeting of the Council that takes place in a year of ordinary elections.**

- 124 After the expiry of its preceding period of eligibility, the Council continues to be an eligible council solely for the purpose of completing any activity undertaken in the exercise of the General Power of Competence which was not completed before the expiry of the Council's preceding period of eligibility referred to in the above standing order.**
- 125 In an election year, the Council shall reaffirm its eligibility to use the General Power of Competence at the Annual Meeting of the Council.**

Matters affecting Council Employees

- 126 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 or committee (as the case may be) has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded.
- 127 The Town Clerk shall keep secure records of all meetings relating to Council employees' performance, capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.
- 128 Records documenting reasons for an employee's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for the same.
- 129 In every year the Council shall review the pay and conditions of service of existing employees.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

- 130 All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of handling requests under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 131 Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman of the Finance & Purposes Committee. The said Committee shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 including exercising the powers of the Proper Officer in respect of Freedom of Information requests.

Relations with the Press / Media

- 132 All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's Press and Media Protocol (refer appendix F).
- 133 All Councillors and officers shall abide by the Press and Media Protocol, as well as, where appropriate, the Social Networking Policy (refer appendix G).

Liaison with Borough and County Councillors

- 134 An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda to the County and Borough Councillors for the appropriate divisions or wards.
- 135 Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter sent to the County or Borough Council shall be sent to the County Councillor for the division concerned or to the District Councillor for the ward concerned, as the case may require.

Financial Matters

- 136 The Council shall consider and approve Financial Regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall be reviewed annually (refer Appendix C).
- 137 Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £40,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as detailed in the Financial Regulations (refer Appendix C).**
- 138 Neither the Council, nor any Committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.
- 139 Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed £25,000, the Council must comply with Articles 109 to 114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and must advertise the contract opportunity on the “Contracts Finder” gov.uk website.**

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Allegations of Breaches of the Code of Conduct

- 141 All allegations shall be referred to the Monitoring Officer at Reigate & Banstead Borough Council.

Code of Conduct on Complaints

- 142 The Council shall deal with complaints of maladministration allegedly committed by the Council or by any officer or member in such manner as adopted by the Council (refer Complaints Procedures, Appendix E).

Variation, Revocation and Suspension of Standing Orders

- 143 Any or every part of the Standing Orders, except those which are mandatory by law, may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

- 144 A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, not mandatory by law, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of as least six councillors.

Standing Orders to be Given to Councillors

- 145 The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a Councillor upon delivery of his declaration of acceptance of office.
- 146 The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.