

SWAFFHAM TOWN COUNCIL - STANDING ORDERS

(Adopted May 2005, amended July 2006 and February 2007)

1. MEETINGS

- a) Meetings of the Council shall be held in each year on such dates and times and at such place as the Council may direct. *(Currently at the Assembly Rooms, Swaffham at 6.45pm on the second Wednesday in each month except August.)*
- b) Smoking is not permitted at any meeting of the Council (Mandatory after 1st July 2007)

2. THE STATUTORY ANNUAL MEETING

- a) In an election year shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office and
- b) In a year which is not an election year shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.

3. (England Only) In addition to the Statutory Annual 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.

3. CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING

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

The full Council meeting shall commence at 6.45pm and at the appropriate point on the agenda adjourn for 15 minutes to allow members of the public to address the Council. The meeting should cease at 9.30pm, with the Chairman having the discretion to warn the Council at 9pm that only urgent business remaining on the agenda shall be taken in the final 30 minutes. Any items on the agenda unable to be dealt with can be deferred to a future meeting. The Chairman shall have the discretion to call a Special meeting of the Council for this purpose (as per Standing Order 44).

4. PROPER OFFICER

Where a statute, regulation or order confers function or duties on the proper officer of the Council in the following cases, he shall be the Town Clerk or nominated officer:-

- a) To receive declarations of acceptance of office.
- b) To receive and record notices disclosing personal and prejudicial interests.
- c) To receive and retain plans and documents.

- d) To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council.
- e) To receive copies of bylaws made by a District Council.
- f) To certify copies of bylaws made by the Council.
- g) To sign summons to attend meetings of the Council.
- h) To keep proper records for all Council meetings.

6. QUORUM OF THE COUNCIL

Three members or one-third of the total membership, whichever is the greater, shall constitute a quorum. (*Five members shall constitute a Quorum.*)

- 7. If a quorum is not present or if during a meeting the number of councillors present (not counting those debarred by reason of a declared prejudicial interest) falls below the required quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned and business not transacted shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Town Mayor may fix.
- 8. For a quorum relating to a committee or sub-committee, please refer to standing order 47.

9. VOTING

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

- 10. If a member so requires, the Clerk shall record the names of the members who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it. Such a request may be made before or after the vote but in any event before moving on to the next business.**

- 11. (1) Subject to (2) and (3) below the Town Mayor may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in any case of an equality of votes may give a casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**

(2) 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 Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor until the end of their term of office he may not give an original vote in an election for Mayor.

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

12. ORDER OF BUSINESS

At each Annual Meeting the first business shall be:-

a) To elect a Town Mayor of the Council

i. A Councillor cannot be elected Mayor in consecutive years.

ii. The Deputy Mayor in the preceding year shall be elected as Mayor. *(with the exception of Town Council election year [by-elections excluded] when the Deputy Mayor if re-elected as a councillor will only be a candidate for Mayor. There would be an opportunity for other nominations to be put forward by the newly elected Council.)* **In the event of more than one candidate being nominated for Mayor this shall be voted for by a signed secret ballot. If a councillor shall call for a recorded vote, the vote shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting but shall remain secret at the Annual Meeting, with the exception of the retiring Mayor exercising a second and casting vote.**

b) To receive the Town Mayor's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.

c) In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.

d) To decide when any declarations of acceptance of office and written undertakings to comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council which have not been received as provided by law shall be received.

e) To elect a Deputy Town Mayor of the Council.

i. With a view to the Deputy Mayor becoming Mayor the following year. *(with the exception of Town Council election year [by-elections excluded] when the Deputy Mayor if re-elected as a councillor is only a candidate for Mayor.)*

In the event of more than one candidate being nominated for Deputy Mayor this shall be voted for by a signed secret ballot. If a councillor shall call for a recorded vote, the vote shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting but shall remain secret at the Annual Meeting, with the exception of the retiring Mayor exercising a second and casting vote.

The Council may choose to discuss the position and to elect a Deputy Mayor in the three months prior to the Annual Meeting in a closed session of a full Council meeting. This decision shall be binding to the Annual meeting (in any year other than election year where the Council can only put forward a candidate for Deputy Mayor).

ii. The Deputy Mayor can only be re-elected in consecutive years in the year of a Town Council election.

f) To appoint representatives to outside bodies.

g) To appoint committees and sub-committees.

- h) To consider the payment of any subscriptions falling to be paid annually.
- i) To inspect any deeds and trust investments in the custody of the Council as required;

and shall thereafter follow the order set out in the Standing Order 15

13. At every meeting other than the Annual Meeting the first business shall be to appoint a Chairman if the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor be absent and to receive such declarations of acceptance of office (if any) as are required by law to be made, or if not then, received to decide when they shall be received.

14. In every year, not later than the meeting at which the estimates for next year are settled, the Council shall review the pay and conditions of service of existing employees. Standing Order 37 must be read in conjunction with their requirement.

15. After the first business has been completed, the order of business, unless the Council otherwise decides on the ground of urgency, shall be at the discretion of the Town Clerk and include the following:-

- a) To receive and record Councillors Declarations of interest.
- b) To adjourn the meeting for 15 minutes at an appropriate time on the published agenda to allow members of the public to address the Council.
- c) 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.
- d) After consideration to approve the signature of the Minutes by the person presiding as a correct record.**
- e) To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.**
- f) To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
- g) To receive such communications as the person presiding may wish to lay before the Council.
- h) To answer questions from Councillors.
- i) To receive and consider reports and minutes of committees.
- j) To receive and consider resolutions or recommendations in the order in which they have been notified.
- k) To authorise the sealing of documents.

- l) If necessary, to authorise the signing of orders for payment.

16. URGENT BUSINESS

A motion to vary the order of business on the ground of urgency:

- a) May be proposed by the Chairman or by any member and, if proposed by the Chairman, may be put to the vote without being seconded, and
- b) Shall be put to the vote without discussion.

17. RESOLUTIONS MOVED ON NOTICE

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 (10) clear days before the next meeting of the Council.

18. The Clerk shall date every notice of resolution or recommendation when received by him, shall number each notice in the order in which it was received and shall enter it in a book which shall be open to the inspection of every member of the Council.
19. The Clerk shall insert in the summons for every meeting all notices of motion or recommendation properly given in the order in which they have been received unless the member giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that he intends to move at some later meeting or that he withdraws it.
20. If a resolution or recommendation specified in the summons 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.
21. 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 or to such other committee as the Council may determine for report; provided that the Chairman, if he considers it to be a matter of urgency, may allow it to be dealt with at the meeting at which it was moved.
22. Every resolution or recommendation shall be relevant to some subject over which the Council has power or duties which affects its area.

23. Resolutions Moved Without Notice
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.
 - 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 authorise the sealing of documents.
 - k) To amend a motion.
 - l) To give leave to withdraw a resolution or amendment.
 - m) To extend the time limit for speeches.
 - n) To exclude the public. (see Order 66 below)
 - o) To silence or eject from the meeting a member named for misconduct. (see order 32 below)
 - p) To give the consent of the Council where such consent is required by these Standing Orders.
 - q) To suspend any Standing Order. (see Order 75 below)
 - r) To adjourn the meeting.

23. Questions

A member may ask the Town Mayor of the Council or the Clerk any question concerning the business of the Council, provided (3) clear days notice of the question has been given to the person to whom it is addressed.

24. No questions not connected with business under discussion shall be asked except during the part of the meeting set aside for questions.

25. Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.
26. A person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer.

27. Rules of Debate

No discussion shall take place upon the Minutes except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the Minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialled by the Town Mayor (or person presiding).

28. a) A resolution or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded, and, unless proper notice has already been given, it shall, if required by the Chairman, be reduced to writing and handed to him before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.
- b) A member when seconding a resolution or amendment may, if he then declares his intention to do so, reserve his speech until a later period of the debate.
- c) A member shall direct his speech to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a question of order.
- d) No speech by a mover of a resolution shall exceed (three) minutes and no other speech shall exceed (three) minutes except by consent of the Council.
- e) An amendment shall be either:-
- i) To leave out words.
 - ii) To leave out words and insert others
 - iii) To insert or add words.
- f) An amendment shall not have to effect of negating the resolution before the Council.
- g) If an amendment be 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.
- h) A further amendment shall not be moved until the Council has disposed of every amendment previously moved.
- i) The mover of a resolution or of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding (three) minutes.
- j) 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 an amendment, or on a point of order, or in personal explanation, or to move a closure.

- k) A member may rise (or request) to make a point of order or a personal explanation. A member rising (or requesting) for these purposes shall be heard forthwith. A personal explanation shall be confirmed to some material part of a former speech by him or her which may have been misunderstood.
- l) 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.
- m) When a resolution is under debate no other resolution shall be moved except the following:-
 - i. To amend the resolution.*
 - ii. To proceed to the next business.*
 - iii. To adjourn the debate.*
 - iv. That the question be now put.*
 - v. That a member named be not further heard.*
 - vi. That a member named do leave the meeting.*
 - vii. That the resolution be referred to a committee.*
 - viii. To exclude the public and press.*
 - ix. To adjourn the meeting.*

29. A member can stand when speaking if permitted by the Town Mayor.

30. a) The ruling of the Town Mayor on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.

b) Members shall address the Town Mayor.
If two or more members rise requests to speak), the Town Mayor shall call upon one of them to speak.

c) Whenever the Town Mayor speaks during a debate all other member shall be seated and silent.

30. CLOSURE

At the end of any speech a member may, without comment, move “that the question be now put”, “that the debate be now adjourned” or “that the Council do now adjourn”. If such motion is seconded, the Town Mayor shall put the motion but, in the case of a motion “that the question be now put”, only if he is of the opinion that the question before the Council has been sufficiently debated. If the motion “that the question be now put” is carried, he shall call upon the mover to

exercise or waive his right of reply and shall put the question 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.

32. DISORDERLY CONDUCT

- a) **All members must behave in a manner required by the Code of Conduct which was adopted by the council on (13th March 2002) a copy of which is annexed to these Standing Orders.**
- b) No member shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Town Mayor, wilfully obstruct business, or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly or in such a manner as to scandalise the Council or bring it into contempt or ridicule.
- c) If, in the opinion of the Town Mayor, a member has broken the provisions of paragraph (a) or (b) of this Order, the Town Mayor shall express that opinion to the Council 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.
- d) If either of the motions mentioned in paragraph (c) is disobeyed, the Town Mayor may suspend the meeting or take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce them.

33. RIGHT OF REPLY

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.

34. ALTERATION OF A RESOLUTION

A member may, with the consent of his seconder, move amendments to his own resolution.

35. RESCISSION OF PREVIOUS RESOLUTION

- a) A decision (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special resolution, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least (five) members of the Council, or by a resolution moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.

- b) When a special resolution or any other resolution moved under the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Order has been disposed of, no similar resolution may be moved within a further six months.

36. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

Where more than two persons have been nominated for any position to be filled by the Council and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken, and so on until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.

37. DISCUSSIONS and RESOLUTIONS affecting EMPLOYEES of the COUNCIL

If at a meeting there arises any question relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service, of any person employed by the Council, it shall not be considered until the Council or committee (*as the case may be*) has decided whether or not the public shall be excluded. (*See Standing Order No. 67.*)

38. RESOLUTIONS ON EXPENDITURE

Any resolution (which is moved otherwise than in pursuance of a recommendation of the Finance Committee or of another committee) and which, if carried, would, in the opinion of the Town Mayor 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 Committee shall report on the financial aspect of the matters).

39. EXPENDITURE

Orders for the payment of money shall be authorised by resolution of the Council and signed by two members.

40. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

- a) A document shall not be sealed on behalf of the Council unless its sealing has been authorised by a resolution.

- b) Any two members of the Council named in a resolution moved under the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Order may seal, on behalf of the Council, any document required by law to be issued under seal.

41. COMMITTEES and SUB-COMMITTEES

The Council may at its Annual Meeting appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as are necessary clearly defining roles of the committees and any delegated powers, but subject to any statutory provision in that behalf:-

- a) Shall not appoint any member of a committee so as to hold office later than the next Annual Meeting.
- b) May appoint persons other than members of the Council to any Committee; who may be under the statutory age of 18 required for election as a Councillor, minimum age of 16 with signed parental (or guardian) consent, and
- c) May subject to the provisions of Order 35 above at any time dissolve or alter the membership of committee.

42. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor ex-officio shall be members of every committee.

43. Every 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, and shall settle its programme of meetings for the year.

44. SPECIAL MEETING

The Chairman of a committee or the Town Mayor of the Council may summon an additional meeting of that committee at any time. An additional meeting shall also be summoned on the requisition in writing (through the Town Clerk) of not less than a quarter of the members of the committee. The summons shall set out the business to be considered at the special meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.

45. SUB-COMMITTEES

Every committee may appoint sub-committees for purposes to be specified by the committee.

46. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the committee shall be members of every sub-committee appointed by it unless they signify that they do not wish to serve.
47. Except where ordered by the Council in the case of a committee, or by the Council or by the appropriate committee in the case of a sub-committee, the quorum of a committee or sub-committee shall be one-third or four of its members whichever is the greater number. (With the exception of the Personnel Committee who have three members. A substitute member may be nominated to make the meeting quorate.)
48. The Standing Orders on rules of debate (except those parts relating to standing and to speaking more than once) and the Standing Order on interests of members in contracts and other matters shall apply to committee and sub-committee meetings.

49. ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- 1) The Council may create advisory committees, whose name, and number of members and the bodies to be invited to nominate members shall be specified.
- 2) The Clerk shall inform the members of each advisory committee of the terms of reference of the committee.
- 3) An advisory committee may make recommendations and give notice thereof to the Council.
- 4) An advisory committee may consist wholly of persons who are not members of the Council.

VOTING IN COMMITTEES

50. Members of committees and sub-committees entitled to vote shall by show of hands, or, if at least two members so request, by signed ballot.
51. **Chairman of committees and sub-committees shall in the case of an equality of votes have a second or casting vote.**

52. PRESENCE of NON-MEMBERS of Committees at Committee Meetings

A member who has proposed a resolution which has been referred to any committee of which he is not a member, may explain his resolution to the committee but shall not vote.

53. ACCOUNTS & FINANCIAL STATEMENT

- 1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this Standing Order or by statute, all accounts for payment and claims upon the Council shall be laid before the Council.
- 2) Where it is necessary to make a payment before it has been authorised by the Council, such payment shall be certified as to its correctness and urgency by the appropriate officer. Such payment shall be authorised by the committee, if any, having charge of the business to which it relates, or by the proper officer for payment with the approval of the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor of the Council.
- 3) All payments ratified under sub-paragraph (2) of this Standing Order shall be separately included in the next schedule of payments before the Council.

54. The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each member at the ordinary meeting next (or as soon after as practicable) after the end of the Financial Year a Financial statement of receipts and payments for the Council.

55. Estimates / Precepts

- 1) The council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting at the end of the month of (December).
- 2) Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Clerk a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than (30th November).

56. Interests (ENGLAND)

If a member has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on (13th March 2002, amended code is before the Council for formal adoption on 16th May 2007) then he shall declare such interest as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the nature and extent of that interest as required.

57. If a member who has declared a personal interest then considers the interest to be prejudicial, he must withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the item to which the interest relates.

58. Interests (WALES only)

If a member has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on then that interest must be declared and a decision made by the member whether to stay or withdraw.

59. The Clerk shall hold a copy of the Register of Member's Interests in accordance with instructions received from the Monitoring Officer of the Responsible Authority and/or as required by statute.
60. If a candidate for any appointment under the Council is to his knowledge related to any member of or the holder of any office under the Council, he and the person to whom he is related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Clerk. A candidate who fails so to do shall be disqualified for such appointment, and, if appointed, may be dismissed without notice. The Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate committee any such disclosure. Where relationship to a member is disclosed this Standing Order shall apply.
61. The Clerk shall make known the purport of this Standing Order to every candidate.
62. CANVASSING OF AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY MEMBERS
- 1) Canvassing of members of the Council or of any committee, directly or indirectly, for any appointment under the Council shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Clerk shall make known the purport of this sub-paragraph of this Standing Order to every candidate.
 - 2) A member of the 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.
63. Standing Order Nos. 60 & 62 shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.
64. INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS
A member may for the purpose of his duty as such (but not otherwise), inspect any document in possession of the Council or a committee, and if copies are available shall, on request, be supplied for the like purpose with a copy.
65. **All minutes kept by the Council and by any committee shall be open for the inspection of any member of the Council.**

66. UNAUTHORISED ACTIVITIES

No member of the Council or of any committee or sub-committee shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council:-

- a) Inspect any lands or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
- b) Issue orders, instructions or directions unless authorised to do so by the Council or the relevant committee or sub-committee.

67. ADMISSION TO THE PUBLIC AND PRESS TO MEETINGS

The public shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its committees and sub-committees, which may, however, temporarily exclude the public by means of the following resolutions:-

“That in view of the special [or 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”

68. The Council shall state the special reason for exclusion.

69. At all meetings of the Council the Chairman may at his/her discretion and at a convenient time in the transaction of business, adjourn the meeting so as to allow any members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business to be transacted at that meeting. (The public are permitted to speak for a period of 15 minutes at an adjournment at the start of the meeting as stated on the published agenda for the monthly full council meeting.)

70. **The Clerk shall afford to the press reasonable facilities for taking their report of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present.** There shall be no audio or video recording or photographs of the meeting without the express approval of the Council.

71. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Town Mayor may, after warning, order that he or she be removed from the meeting.

72. The Town Mayor and Town Clerk (*or their respective Deputies in their absence*) shall be permitted to give press reports or comments on Council Policy, on going Council business, forthcoming agenda items and related business of local interest. Individual comments by others must not relate to or be attributed to their position as a Town Councillor or Employee of the Council, unless they have the delegated authority to comment on behalf of the Town Council. (N.B. this does not prevent other individual councillors or employees from talking to or being

quoted by the press, but they should not claim to represent the Council as a whole or bring the Council into disrepute.)

73. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

- 1) No member of the Council or of any committee or sub-committee shall disclose to any person not a member of the Council any business declared to be confidential by the Council, the committee or the sub-committee as the case may be.
- 2) Any member in breach of the provisions of paragraph (1) of this Standing Order shall be removed from any committee or sub-committee of the Council by the Council.

74. LIAISON WITH COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

A notice of meeting shall be sent together with an invitation to attend to the County, Borough, Unitary or District Councillor for the appropriate ward.

75. Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter ordered to be sent to the County Council or Planning Authority shall be transmitted to the County Councillor for the division or to the Planning Authority Councillor for the ward as the case may require.

76. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- 1) The Clerk shall, as soon as it is received, enter in a book kept for the purpose the following particulars of every planning application notified to the Council:-
 - (a) the date on which it was received ;
 - (b) the name of the applicant;
 - (c) the place to which it relates;
 - (d) The Clerk shall refer every planning application received to the Chairman / Chairman of the Planning Committee or in the Chairman's absence to the Vice-Chairman within 48 hours of receipt.

77. CODE OF CONDUCT ON COMPLAINTS

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 except for those complaints which should be properly directed to the Standards Board for consideration.

78. VARIATION, REVOCATION and SUSPENSION of STANDING ORDERS

Any or every part of the Standing Orders except those printed in **bold type** may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

79. A resolution permanently to add, vary or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

80. DELEGATED AUTHORITY – TERMS OF REFERENCE to Committees
The Town Council Committee Structure was agreed in June 2004:-

- a) Finance & General Purposes Committee (*Consisting of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor as ex-officio members, plus seven Councillors, with the exception of the December Budget meeting where all Councillors are summoned to attend and participate as members of the Committee*)

The Committee to meet once a quarter during March or April, June or July, September or October, and in December each year. This committee has the main task of monitoring, agreeing and delivering the annual Budget. The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) shall provide regular reports to members, similarly the Internal Auditor will give independent reports to the Committee. The Finance & General Purposes Committee has full decision making powers on all matters of finance, with the exception of buying or selling land or property and setting the annual Precept which would be referred to Full Council.

- b) Open Spaces & Civic Amenities (*Consisting of the Mayor & Deputy Mayor as ex-officio members, plus seven Councillors.*)

The Committee to meet at least twice a year in January or February and July or September, or as required. The Committee deals with general management issues related to reviewing Council policy and the delivery of services (e.g. grounds maintenance contract, health & safety). This is in respect of the Civic role of the Mayor, nominating Honorary Citizens, year on year management of the Allotments, Campinglands, Cemetery, the Churchyard, Market, Northwell Pool, the Buttercross, War Memorial, Pedlars Sign, Street Furniture and the Recreation Ground. The Town Council would be referred to if items of major expenditure over £500 or any variance away from budgeted figures of more than £250 and any proposed change of use for any amenities as listed. The day to day, management issues are dealt with by the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk, policy amendments would need to be approved by full Council.

- c) Market (Working Sub-Committee) *(Consisting of Four Councillors + three Market Traders nominated annually by the Traders at the Saturday Market and one from the Farmers Market.)* The Market Committee to meet as required. The Market Superintendent, Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk to work with the Committee and deal with all day to day management issues. With a minimum of two meetings a year. The Market Committee has full decision making powers with regards to the management of the Market, granting and revoking licences and implementing Market Policy. The Town Council hold an annual Market Traders meeting in June each year and annually review Market Policy.
- d) Personnel Committee *(Consisting of three Councillors with first option to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Past Mayor. With one additional nominated substitute member.)* The full Council to interview and appoint the Town Clerk and approve any policy changes in respect of staffing levels and pay scales. The Town Clerk to interview and recommend staffing appointments, also to be responsible for and manage the staff to deliver Services to the Town and Council policy. The Personnel Committee to have full decision making powers on all other matters relating to Personnel, giving regular reports to full Council. The Town Clerk is responsible for reporting to and working with the Personnel Committee. The committee to meet as and when required, they should act as an integral part of the Council's Grievance Procedures, (familiarizing themselves with Employment Law) with the full Council as the final arbitrary body. To also carry out the Town Clerk's annual appraisal.
- e) Planning/Development Control Committee *(Consisting of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor as ex-officio members, plus seven Councillors)* Delegated authority is given to the Committee to deal with any planning applications that arrive outside of normal meeting cycles. The Committee to meet as and when required, to ensure that comments are returned to Breckland Council within the 21 days consultation cycle. Full decision making powers are given to the Planning Committee. In the majority of cases Planning Applications will be dealt with at full Council meetings.
- f) Councillor Representatives Three Councillors appointed annually to the Assembly Rooms/Community Centre Joint Management Group. Four Councillors appointed annually to a Twinning Liaison Committee, to work with four members of the Twinning Association. Four yearly to Swaffham Museum Ltd. Five Councillors + Mayor & Deputy Mayor as Ex-Officio Trustees appointed four yearly to Swaffham Relief in Need Charity. Various other individual appointments are made as required.
- g) Recreation Ground Project Sub-Committee *(Consisting of six Councillors, + five non-Councillors, interested parties to include representation from appropriate local groups and residents, committee to total no more than eleven members).* The

committee should meet at least quarterly or whilst developing a project at any time to suit. The aim and objective of this committee is to enhance the Recreation Ground at Haspall's Road by formulating proposals, costing out each project, seeking grant funding and recommending for approval of the full council in principle, in detail and to request match funding. In addition the committee may make recommendations to any Council Committee or to the full council on any aspect relating to the management of the Recreation Ground. The Project sub-committee has full autonomy in the development of proposals relating to the enhancement of the Recreation Ground and the preparation of a project recommendation, inclusive of a sustainable exit strategy and participation in the implementation of delivering the project. The sub-committee must keep the council and the Open Spaces & Amenities Committee informed of progress. Swaffham Town Council manages the Recreation Ground and has final say on the acceptance or support of each proposal.

- h) Town Group (*Consisting of six Councillors + five non-Councillors, committee to total no more than eleven voting members, but can have any number of non-voting members as required*). The committee should meet at least quarterly or as frequent as necessary. The aims and objectives of this committee is to improve the quality of life for those living and working in the town of Swaffham. They can initiate and develop projects and proposals, carry out consultation, costing out each project, seeking grant funding and recommending for approval in principle, in detail and to request match funding. In addition the Town Group take direction from the Town Council, but can work with and make recommendations to any Town Council Committee, Icen Partnership Directors, Management Group, Project or Focus Group. Swaffham Town Council has the final say on the acceptance or support of each proposal, all projects should have a sustainable exit strategy. The Town Group has full autonomy in the research, development and consultation of proposals relating to the main aims and objectives. The Group to actively promote its activities and must keep the Town Council and Icen Directors informed of progress. Three of the six Councillors on the Town Group should be appointed as Directors of Icen Partnership. Whilst the three Councillors are appointed by the Town Council their overriding responsibility is as Directors of the said registered charity they would be duty bound to act within the main objects of the Charity.
- i) New Committees, Sub-Committees, Advisory Groups or Working Parties The terms of reference for any new initiatives should be set in advance by the Town Council.

81. COUNCILLOR GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Where elected members need to obtain information from the Town Clerk, the files at the Town Hall or from a Principal Authority/Government Agency in respect of Town Council policy or

actions agreed by full council or delegated Committee/Management Group or Sub-committee. More often than not, the information will be available immediately under the Freedom of Information Act, but in the event that it was not readily available for any reason the following would apply:-

- a) The initial request for information should be made verbally to the Town Clerk (or in his absence the Deputy Town Clerk.) An immediate verbal response is required to establish whether the information is readily available, or would require some research or that there would be a time delay.
- b) On receipt of the initial verbal response from the Town Clerk (or in his absence the Deputy Town Clerk) the Councillor could then place the request in writing requiring a satisfactory response from the Town Clerk within a reasonable amount of time. i.e. Three clear working days, excluding the day the request is received in writing and the day the response is given.
- c) If the Councillor does not receive the information or an acceptable response as to why it is not available, then the matter should be raised with the Mayor to call a Personnel meeting in order to establish the facts and report back to the next full Council meeting. N.B. This may impinge on standard employment rights or staff grievance procedures, if this is so, the Personnel Committee would deal with this matter in the appropriate way.

82. STANDING ORDERS TO BE GIVEN TO MEMBERS

A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each member by the Clerk upon delivery to him of the member's declaration of acceptance of office and written undertaking to comply with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.