



OAKHAM TOWN COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

**Adopted by the Council
MARCH 2011**

(Last amended October 2011)

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1 Meetings

Mandatory for full Council meetings	●
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- a **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.**

- ● b **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.**

- ● c **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.**

- d Subject to standing order 1(c) above, members of the public are permitted to make representations in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.

- e The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing order 1(d) above] shall not exceed 15 minutes.

- f Subject to standing order 1(e) above, 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 3 minutes.

- g In accordance with standing order 1(d) above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate.
- h In accordance with standing order 1(g) above, the Chairman may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor or an employee for a written or oral response.
- i A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- j An officer, Councillor or Advisor to the Council shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]. The Chairman (or person acting in that capacity) may at any time permit an individual to be seated when speaking.
- k Any person speaking at a meeting shall address his comments to the Chairman.
- l 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.
- m **Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is not permitted without the Council's prior written consent.**
- n **In accordance with standing order 1(c) above, the press shall be provided reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**

- o **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman.**

- p **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.**

- q **Subject to model standing order 1 (y) below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.**

- r **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. (See also standing orders 2 (i) and (j) below.)**

- s **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, 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. At the request of a Councillor, supported by two other Councillors, a signed ballot may be taken on any motion to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that motion. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.**

- t **The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent.**

- u **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 at which the approval was given.**

- v **The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to all councillors in respect**

of the entire meeting.

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w **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.** *(See also standing orders 7 and 8 below.)*

- x **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 3.**

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y **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting be adjourned. Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be transacted when the meeting becomes quorate or at a following meeting.

- z i. Full Council Meetings shall not exceed a period of 2 hours.

 ii. Meetings of the Planning and Parks Committee shall not exceed 2 hours.

 iii. Staffing Committee meetings shall not exceed 1 hour

 iv. A meeting of the Council or any of its Committees may be extended by resolution for up to 30 minutes to allow business to be concluded. No further extensions shall be permitted except in exceptional circumstances

2 Ordinary Council Meetings

See also Standing 1 above

- 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 councillors elected take office.**
- b. **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a 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 the 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 on such dates and times as the Council directs.**
- e. **The election of the Chairman who will also be Town Mayor and Vice-Chairman of the Council who will also be the Deputy Town Mayor shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.**
- f. **The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g. **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, 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.**
- h. **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.

- i. 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.**

- k. Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows:
 - i. To receive the declaration of office of the Chairman of the Council.
 - ii. In an election year, delivery by councillors of their declarations of acceptance of office.
 - iii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council and to receive and note minutes of and/or to determine recommendations made by committees.
 - iv. Receipt of nominations to existing committees
 - v. Appointment of any new committees, confirmation of the terms of reference, the number of members (including, if appropriate, substitute councillors) and receipt of nominations to them.
 - vi. Review of representation on, or work with, external bodies and arrangements for reporting back.
 - vii. In a year of elections, if a Council's period of eligibility to exercise the power of well being expired the day before the annual meeting, to review and make arrangements to reaffirm eligibility.
 - viii. Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council for the year ahead.

3 Proper Officer

- (a) The Council's Proper Officer shall be either the Clerk or such other employees as may be nominated by the Council from time to time. The Proper Officer or the employee appointed to act as such shall, during the Proper Officer's absence, fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer in standing orders.
- (b) The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following:
- i. **Sign and serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council, committee or sub committee at least 3 clear days before the meeting.**
 - ii. **Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 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 councillors is signed by them).**
 - iii. Subject to standing orders 4 (a)-(e) below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 5 days before the meeting confirming his 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 office, in accordance with standing order [3(b)i] above.**
 - v. Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.
 - vi. **Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.**
 - vii. **Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.**
 - viii. Retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.
 - ix. Keep proper records required before and after meetings.
 - x. 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.

- xi. Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.
- xii. Manage the organisation, storage of and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form.
- xiii. Arrange for legal deeds to be sealed using the Council's common seal
See also standing orders 14(a) and (b)
- xiv. 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.
- xv. Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose.
- xvi. Retain custody of the seal of the Council which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
- xvii. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders

4 Motions requiring written notice

- a. In accordance with standing order 3(b) (iii) above, no motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Council's Proper Officer at least 7 clear days before the next meeting.
- b. The Proper Officer may, before including a motion in the agenda received in accordance with standing order 4(a) above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- c. If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with Standing order 4(a) 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 in clear and certain language at least 7 clear days before the meeting.
- d. If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included or rejected in the agenda.
- e. Having consulted the Chairman or councillors pursuant to standing order 4(d) above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
- f. Notice of every motion received in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be numbered in the order received and shall be entered in a book, which shall be open to inspection by all councillors.
- g. Every motion and resolution shall relate to the Council's statutory functions, powers and lawful obligations or shall relate to an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

5 Motions not requiring written notice

- a. Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice:
 - i. To appoint a person to preside at a meeting
 - ii. To approve the absences of councillors
 - iii. To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting
 - iv. To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting
 - v. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting
 - vi. To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience
 - vii. To proceed to the next business on the agenda
 - viii. To close or adjourn debate
 - ix. To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee
 - x. To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any councillors (including substitutes) thereto
 - xi. To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee
 - xii. To dissolve a committee or sub-committee
 - xiii. To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee
 - xiv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub-committee or an employee
 - xv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant
 - xvi. To authorise legal deeds [to be sealed by the Council's common seal] OR [signed by two councillors] and witnessed
(see standing orders 14 (a) and (b) below)
 - xvii. To authorise the payment of monies up to £1,000
 - xviii. To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration and which shall not have the effect of nullifying it
 - xix. To extend the time limit for speeches
 - xx. To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting

- xxi. To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public whose conduct is considered in the view of the chairman to be disorderly conduct and/or to disrupt the meeting
 - xxii. To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders
 - xxiii. To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law**
 - xxiv. To adjourn the meeting
 - xxv. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies
 - xxvi. To answer questions from councillors on points relevant to the business or working of the council but not issues regarding the alleged behaviour of a councillor/group of councillors, employee or group of employees
 - xxvii. To extend the duration of a meeting in accordance with Standing Order 1 (z) (iv)
- b. If a motion falls within the terms of reference of a committee or sub-committee or within the delegated powers conferred on an employee, a referral of the same may be made to such committee or sub-committee or employee provided that the Chairman may direct for it to be dealt with at the present meeting for reasons of urgency or expedience.

6 Rules of debate

- a. Items included in the agenda shall normally be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chairman's direction or by the passing of a resolution by the members present.
- b. Each item shall be introduced by the chairman who may, if he considered it appropriate call upon another person present to clarify the item to be debated.
- c. Where this is a planning application ward members will be invited to speak first.
- d. If a member has requested an item on the agenda they shall be invited to speak first.
- e. The chairman shall allow all members the opportunity to debate an item, he will not allow a proposal to be made and seconded until he is certain that all members have had opportunity to contribute to the debate.
- f. The chairman shall call for a proposal to be made if he is of the opinion the debate is not moving further.
- g. All proposals must be seconded before a vote can take place.
- h. A member who makes a proposal may amend the wording of the proposal without vote or reference to others providing at that time it has not been seconded.
- i. Once a proposal has been seconded, the member who makes the proposal may only amend the wording of the proposal with agreement of the seconder. If this permission has been granted the amended proposal shall be debated and voted on as in 6 (j) below.

- j. Once a proposal has been seconded, any member other than the original proposer may make a proposal to revise the wording of the original proposal if this is seconded it will be debated and voted upon. If the amended proposal falls then the original proposal will be debated and voted upon. If the amended proposal is passed then it will have the effect of replacing the original proposal providing that during the course of the debate of the amendment, a member may propose a further amendment to the wording. Only one amendment shall be debated at a time the order of which shall be directed by the chairman. No further amendment to a proposal shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.
- k. A member may raise a point of order at any time by raising his hand and being invited to speak by the Chairman. A member raising a point of order shall identify the standing order he considered has been breached or specify the irregularity which has caused the concern.
- l. If an amendment is carried, the original motion, as amended, shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion which any further amendment may be moved.
- m. The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 3 minutes.
- n. A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman and his decision shall be final.
- o. When a councillor's 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 silent or for him to leave the meeting
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration to exclude the public and press

- vii. to adjourn the meeting
 - viii. to suspend any standing order, except those which are mandatory
- p. In respect of standing order 6(o)(iv) above, the Chairman shall first 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.

7 Code of conduct

- a All councillors shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.**
- b All councillors shall undertake training in the code of conduct at the earliest opportunity.**
- c Paragraph 12(2) of the code of conduct contained in the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 (SI No.1159) has been adopted by the Council or pursuant to relevant provisions in a statutory code of conduct in force at the time, councillors may exercise the rights contained in standing order 7(d) below only if members of the public are permitted to (i) make representations, (ii) answer questions and (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted.**
- d Councillors with a prejudicial interest in relation to any item of business being transacted at a meeting may (i) make representations, (ii) answer questions and (iii) give evidence relating to the business being transacted but must, thereafter, leave the room or chamber.**

8 Questions

- a A councillor may seek an answer to a maximum 3 questions per meeting concerning any business of the Council provided 3 clear days notice of the question(s) in writing has been given to the Clerk

- b Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

- c It will be for the Chairman to decide whether the question is appropriate or whether the question will be answered in open session, in writing or by a personal meeting.

- d A person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer the question.

9 Minutes

- a. If a copy of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting has been circulated to councillors no later than the day of service of the summons to attend the scheduled meeting they shall be taken as read.
- b. No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the minutes shall be raised in accordance with standing order 5(a)(iv) above.
- c. 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.
- d. If the Chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

“The Chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the majority of the () and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- e. 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.

10 Disorderly conduct

- a. No person shall persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman or wilfully obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively, irregularly or improperly or in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.
- b. If, in the opinion of the Chairman or any member, there has been a breach of standing order 10(a) above, the Chairman or member 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.
- c. If a resolution made in accordance with standing order 10(b) above, is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or he may adjourn the meeting.

11 Rescission of previous resolutions

- a. A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least half of the members of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- b. When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to standing order 11(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

12 Voting on appointments

Where more than 2 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. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

13 Expenditure

- a. Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- b. **The Council's financial regulations shall be reviewed once a year.**
- c. **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.**

14 Execution and sealing of legal deeds

See also Standing Order 5(a)(xvi) above

- a. A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution.
- b. **In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 14(a) above, the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two members of the Council who shall sign the deed as witnesses.**

15 Committees, sub – Committees and Working Groups

See also Standing Order 1 above

The Council may, at its annual meeting, appoint standing committees and working groups and may at any other time appoint such other committees and working groups as may be necessary, and:

- a. Shall determine their terms of reference;
- b. May permit committees and working groups to determine the dates of their meetings;
- c. Shall appoint and determine the term of office of councillor or non-councillor members of such a committee or working group (unless the appointment of non-councillors is prohibited by law) so as to hold office no later than the next annual meeting.
- d. May in accordance with standing orders, dissolve a committee or working group at any time.
- e. Unless there is a Council resolution to the contrary, every committee may appoint a sub-committee or working group whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by a resolution of the committee.
- f. Unless the Council or the Committee has named the Chairman, every committee, sub-committee or working group shall, at its first meeting before proceeding with any other business, elect a chairman and may also elect a vice chairman
- g. A working group may co-opt others to help it progress business to a point where a report is brought to the Council or committee for a decision. A working group cannot make decisions that are binding on the Council.

16 Extraordinary meetings

See also standing order 1 above

- 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 7 days of having been requested to do so by two councillors, those two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.**

- c. The Chairman of a committee (or a sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or 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 2 councillors, those 2 councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee (or a sub-committee). The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by 2 councillors.

17 Advisory committees

See also standing order 1 above

- a. The Council may appoint advisory committees comprised of a number of councillors and non-councillors.
- b. Advisory committees and any sub-committees may consist wholly of persons who are non-councillors.

18 Accounts and Financial Statement

- a. All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Council's financial regulations, which shall be reviewed at least annually.
- b. The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after each month end a monthly statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments for that month and the balances held at the end of each month. This statement should include a comparison with the budget for the financial year. A Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis (receipts and payments, or 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.

19 Estimates/precepts

- a. **The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of January.**
- b. Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Proper Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than December.

20 Canvassing of and recommendations by Councillors

- a. 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.
- b. 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.
- c. This standing order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

21 Inspection of documents

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.

22 Unauthorised activities

Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name of, 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.

23 Confidential business

- a. Councillors and employees shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware is of a confidential nature.
- b. A councillor in breach of the provisions of standing order 24(a) above may be removed from a committee or a sub-committee by a resolution of the Council.

24 Power of well-being

- a. **Before exercising the power to promote well-being, 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.**
- b. **The Council's period of eligibility begins on the date that the resolution under standing order 25 (a) above was made and expires on the day before the annual meeting of the Council that takes place in a year of ordinary elections.**
- c. **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 power to promote well-being which was not completed before the expiry of the Council's preceding period of eligibility referred to in standing order 25(b) above**

25 Matters affecting council employees

If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the Council or appropriate committee or the appropriate sub-committee has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to standing order 1(c) above.

26 Freedom of Information Act 2000

- a. 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.
- b. Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chairman of the Council. The Council 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 set out under standing order 3(b) (ix) above.

27 Relations with the press/media

- a. 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 policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.
- b. In accordance with the Council's policy in respect to dealing with the press and/or other media, councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media that purport to be the views of the Council.

28 Financial matters

- a. **Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be in accordance with the Financial Regulations**
- b. **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.**

29 Variation, revocation and suspension of standing orders

- a. 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.
- b. A motion to permanently add to or to vary or to revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders not mandatory by law shall not be carried unless two-thirds of the councillors present (minimum of 6 councillors voting) at a meeting of the Council vote in favour of the same.

30 Standing orders to be given to councillors

- a. 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.
- b. The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.
- c. A councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than 3 times in one meeting may result in him being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.

31 Delegation of Functions

- a. That the Council delegates, subject to any statutory provision, the following function to the Planning and Parks Committee:
The power to make any decisions on behalf of, and in the best interests of the Council on all items considered at meetings of the Committee subject to the condition that any expenditure incurred in any such decision does not exceed that stated in the agreed budget for the Committee.
- b. That the Planning and Parks Committee delegates to the Proper Officer, in consultation with at least two members of the Council, the power to consider Planning Applications received and to make observations and comments thereon subject to the following criteria:
 - i. All Planning Applications involving conservatories only.
 - ii. All Planning Applications involving internal works only.

32 Delegation of Emergency Powers

The Council authorises the Clerk or his appointed deputy to act on behalf of, and to make a decision in the best interests of, the Council in an urgent situation. Any action taken by the Clerk under this Standing Order is to be notified to the appropriate Committee or the Council as soon as practicable.

33 Dress Code at Meetings

At meetings of Oakham Town Council and its Committees, all Members shall wear appropriate dress.

34 Mobile Telephones etc.

Except by prior arrangement, all forms of mobile telecommunication are to be switched off prior to the start of any meeting of the Council or any of its Committees.

35 Co-option of Councillors

Should a vacancy arise to become a Member of Oakham Town Council then the following procedure will be applied:

- a. If required, the requisite notices will be obtained and displayed for the statutory period.
- b. Should an election be called then the statutory arrangements will be made.
- c. If an election is not called then the position will be advertised in the local press and members of the public invited to apply for the position. The Clerk will ensure that all applicants receive the same information as to what the role entails.
- d. All people who apply and who are not statutorily disqualified from becoming a Town Councillor will be interviewed. A copy of their application will be distributed to all members.
- e. The interview of prospective candidates for co-option shall be undertaken by a minimum of three councillors appointed specifically for the task
- f. Following the interview process the decision on who will be co-opted will be taken at the next scheduled Council Meeting. Voting will be in accordance with Standing Order 12 requiring an absolute majority in favour of one candidate.
- g. In accordance with Standing Order 21, all applicants who are invited for interview will be informed that they are not to seek to influence any member of the Council with regard to the vacancy. Should this occur then the member or members who have been approached are to notify the Chairman immediately. The Chairman shall then instruct the Clerk to inform the candidate that they will not be considered for the vacancy.