



Standing Orders – Highley Parish Council (Adopted 12 May 2026)

(Fully updated to reflect NALC Model Standing Orders 2025, rewritten for local use)

1. Rules of Debate

- Motions are considered in the order listed on the agenda unless the Chair decides otherwise.
- A motion must be proposed and seconded before it may be debated.
- Amendments must add or remove words without negating the original motion.
- Only one amendment may be debated at a time unless the Chair directs otherwise.
- The Chair may close debate when satisfied that councillors have had sufficient opportunity to contribute.
- Councillors may speak once per motion unless speaking to an amendment, raising a point of order, giving a personal explanation, or exercising a right of reply.

2. Disorderly Conduct

- No person may obstruct business or behave offensively.
- If behaviour does not improve after a warning, the Chair or any councillor may propose that the person be silenced or excluded.
- If disorder continues, the Chair may adjourn or close the meeting.

3. Meetings Generally

- Meetings will not be held in premises where alcohol is supplied unless no suitable alternative is available.
- A minimum of **three clear days' notice** is required for all meetings (excluding the day of issue and the day of the meeting).
- Meetings are open to the public unless confidential or special reasons justify exclusion.
- **Public Participation:**

- Total time allowed: **15 minutes**
- Maximum per speaker: **3 minutes**
- Speakers raise a hand to indicate a wish to speak.
- The press may attend and report on meetings.
- The Chair presides; in their absence the Vice-Chair, or if absent, a councillor chosen by those present.
- Decisions are made by majority vote.
- The Chair has an original vote and a casting vote.
- Minutes must record attendance, declarations of interest, dispensations, public participation, and all resolutions.
- A meeting is quorate when at least one-third of members are present, and never fewer than three.
- If a meeting becomes inquorate, business is adjourned.
- **Maximum meeting length: 2 hours.**

4. Committees and Sub-Committees

Highley Parish Council operates the following committees:

Planning Committee

Revenue & Resources Committee

- Only **councillors** may sit on these committees.
- Working groups may include members of the public.
- The Council determines committee terms of reference, membership, quorum (minimum three), and meeting frequency.
- Committee Chairs are appointed by Full Council unless delegated.

5. Ordinary Council Meetings

- The Annual Council Meeting is held in May.
- The first business is the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
- The Annual Meeting will also:
 - Confirm minutes
 - Review delegation arrangements
 - Review committee terms of reference
 - Appoint committee members
 - Review standing orders

- Review policies (Standing Orders, Code of Conduct, Complaints Procedure, GDPR/Data Protection, FOI Publication Scheme, Equality & Diversity, Health & Safety, Safeguarding, Disciplinary & Grievance).
- Set meeting dates for the year

6. Extraordinary Meetings

- The Chair may call an extraordinary meeting at any time.
- If the Chair does not call a meeting within seven days of a written request from two councillors, those councillors may convene the meeting.
- Committee Chairs may call extraordinary committee meetings.

7. Previous Resolutions

- A resolution may not be reversed within six months unless:
 - A special motion is submitted with written notice from the required number of councillors, or
 - A committee recommends reconsideration.

8. Voting on Appointments

- If more than two candidates are nominated and no one receives a majority, the candidate with the fewest votes is removed and voting continues until a majority is achieved.

9. Motions Requiring Written Notice

- Motions must relate to council functions or matters affecting the parish.
- Written notice must be submitted at least **three clear days** before the meeting.
- The Proper Officer may correct minor errors or reject unclear or improper motions.

10. Motions Without Notice

May include:

- Correcting minutes
- Moving to a vote
- Changing agenda order
- Referring matters to committee

- Excluding press/public
- Suspending the meeting
- Adjourning or closing the meeting

11. Management of Information

- The Council must maintain secure systems for storing and handling information.
- Confidential information must not be disclosed without legal justification.

12. Draft Minutes

- Draft minutes circulated with the agenda are taken as read.
- Discussion is limited to accuracy.
- Minutes are approved by resolution and signed by the Chair.
- If the Chair disagrees with the accuracy but the meeting approves them, a note is added to that effect.

13. Code of Conduct and Dispensations

- Councillors must comply with the adopted Code of Conduct.
- **Dispensation decisions are delegated to Full Council.**

14. Code of Conduct Complaints

- Complaints are handled in accordance with the Council's adopted procedure.

15. Proper Officer

- The Proper Officer is responsible for issuing agendas, receiving declarations, managing correspondence, and other statutory duties.

16. Responsible Financial Officer

- The RFO manages the Council's financial administration in accordance with Financial Regulations.

17. Accounts and Accounting Statements

- The Council must comply with statutory accounting and audit requirements.

18. Financial Controls and Procurement

- The Council must follow its adopted Financial Regulations.
- Procurement thresholds follow current legislation, including the Procurement Act 2023.

19. Staffing Matters

- Staffing matters are handled by delegated staffing committee consisting of the Chair and Vice Chair.

20. Responsibilities to Provide Information

- The Council must comply with FOI and publication requirements.

21. Data Protection

- The Council must comply with data protection legislation and maintain appropriate policies.

22. Relations with the Press/Media

- The Council's press/media policy applies.
- Councillors must not speak on behalf of the Council unless authorised.

23. Execution of Legal Deeds

- Highley Parish Council does **not** use a common seal.
- Legal deeds are executed by resolution and signed by the Chair and Proper Officer.

24. Communicating with Unitary Councillors

- Communications should be respectful and relevant to parish matters.

25. Restrictions on Councillor Activities

- Councillors may not act on behalf of the Council without proper authority.

26. Standing Orders Generally

- Standing Orders may be suspended except where they reflect statutory requirements.
- They must be reviewed annually.