

Forest Heath District Council

Council Procedure Rules

Introduction

1. Ordinary meetings of the Council will usually take place six times a year on a Wednesday, commencing at 6pm.

Meetings will commence at 6pm and at 9pm shall stand adjourned until the following day at 6pm whenever practicable unless the chairman is of the view that the meeting will conclude within 30 minutes thereafter and exercises his or her discretion to continue the meeting.

2. Meetings will usually take place at the Council's main offices but may take place at other venues with the agreement of the Chairman.
3. There are four types of Council Meetings, the Annual meeting, Ordinary meetings, Extraordinary Meetings and Special meetings. These are dealt with in more detail below.
4. Notice of all meetings of the Council will be given to the public by the Chief Executive in accordance with the Access to Information Rules five clear working days before the date of the meeting. Notice by summons will also be given by the Chief Executive to each member of the Council in the manner prescribed in the Access to Information Procedure rules. The summons shall contain the date, time and place of each meeting, specify the business to be transacted and be accompanied by such reports that may be available.
5. The Chief Executive is authorised to cancel a meeting where the agenda has already been issued if it considered expedient. Before exercising this authority, the Chief Executive will consult with the Chairman and the Leader of the Council. Any outstanding business will be held over to the next ordinary meeting or an extraordinary meeting on a date to be arranged.
6. The Council may make audio and/or visual recordings of meetings and broadcast or otherwise make them available to the public on its website or by other means.

1. Annual meeting of the Council

1.1 Timing and business

The Annual Meeting of the Council will be held:

- 1.1.1 in a year of ordinary elections of councillors to the Council, on such day within the twenty-one days immediately following the day of retirement of councillors as the Council may fix;
- 1.1.2 in any other year, on such day in the month of March, April or May as the Council may fix;
- 1.1.3 at such hour as the Council may fix.
- 1.1.4 at the Annual Meeting, the Council will:-
 - (a) elect a Member to preside if the retiring Chairman and Vice Chairman are not present;
 - (b) elect the Chairman for the ensuing year;
 - (c) receive any announcements from the Chairman;
 - (d) receive any announcements from the officer advising the Chairman including apologies for absence;
 - (e) elect the Vice-Chairman;
 - (f) elect the Leader at the post-election annual meeting;
 - (g) if practicable, be told by the Leader about the composition and constitution of the Cabinet for the coming year, and the names of Councillors he/she has chosen to be Members of the Cabinet;
 - (h) determine the Council's committee structure and arrangements for outside bodies in accordance with 1.2 below;
 - (i) appoint the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
 - (j) update the Constitution if necessary in line with 1.2 below;
 - (k) consider any other business set out in the notice convening the meeting.

1.2 Selection of councillors on committees and outside bodies

At the Annual Meeting, the Council will:-

- (a) decide which Committees to establish for the municipal year;
- (b) decide the size and agree terms of reference for those Committees;
- (c) decide the allocation of seats and substitutes to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules;
- (d) receive, or arrange the delegation of, nominations of Councillors to serve on each Committee and on any outside body for which a new appointment or re-appointment is required; and
- (e) appoint to those Committees and outside bodies except where appointment to those bodies has been delegated by the Council or is exercisable only by the Cabinet.

2. Ordinary meetings of the Council

2.1 Ordinary meetings of the Council will usually take place at 6pm but may take place at any other time in accordance with the programme previously approved by the Council. The starting time of an ordinary meeting may be changed before the publication of the agenda by agreement of the Leader and Chairman.

2.2 Unless changed in accordance with paragraph 2.3 below, the order of business at every ordinary meeting of the Council will be:-

- (a) to elect a person to preside if the Chairman and Vice Chairman are not present;
- (b) to deal with any business required by law to be dealt with first;
- (c) to confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the last meeting of the Council; except that minutes of a special meeting or an extraordinary meeting of the Council will be submitted for confirmation to the next ordinary meeting of the Council;
- (d) the Chairman's announcements;
- (e) to receive any announcements from the officer advising the Chairman (including apologies for absence);
- (f) declarations of interests
- (g) the Leader's report and questions thereon in accordance with Rules 8.1 – 8.3 below;
- (h) to receive and answer questions from members of the public in accordance with Rule 6 below;
- (i) to receive, and when appropriate debate, any petitions in accordance with the Petition Scheme attached as Appendix A to these rules;
- (j) to deal with any business remaining from the last Council meeting in accordance with Rules 5.2 and 11.11(c);
- (k) to deal with the referrals report of recommendations from Cabinet and committees;
- (l) to consider any other business specified in the summons to the meeting, including reports of the Overview and Scrutiny and Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee;
- (m) to receive reports about, and receive questions and answers on, the business of joint arrangements and external organisations;
- (n) questions to chairmen on the business transacted by their committees since the last ordinary meeting of Council;
- (o) to consider any motions under Rule 9 in the order in which they are received;
- (p) to answer any questions received under the terms of Rules 8.4 – 8.8.

2.3 The order of business (except for items (a), (b) and (c) of paragraph 2.2 of these Rules) may be changed:-

- (a) before or at a meeting, as the Chairman sees fit; or

- (b) by a resolution of the meeting passed on a motion under Rule 9 or Rule 10.1(c).

3. Special and extraordinary meetings of the Council

Calling Special or Extraordinary Meetings

- 3.1 An extraordinary meeting is one that is additional to the scheduled ordinary meetings and is called to deal with matters that cannot conveniently be dealt with at one of those meetings. A special meeting is one called for a specific and unusual purpose, for example to confer an honorary title.

Those listed below may request the Chief Executive to call Council meetings in addition to ordinary meetings:-

- (a) the Council by resolution;
- (b) the Chairman;
- (c) the Monitoring Officer; and
- (d) in accordance with paragraph 3 of Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), any five Members of the Council if they have signed a requisition presented to the Chairman and he/she has refused to call a meeting or has failed to call a meeting within seven days of the presentation of the requisition.

Business

- 3.2 Special or extraordinary meetings will:-

- (a) elect a person to preside if the Chairman and Vice Chairman are not present;
- (b) receive any declarations of interest;
- (c) (at extraordinary meetings only) receive and answer questions from members of the public in accordance with rule 6 and limited to the subject matter of the business to be transacted at the meeting; and
- (d) deal with the business for which the special or extraordinary meeting was called.

- 3.3 No other business will be dealt with at a special meeting or an extraordinary meeting of the Council.

4. Appointment of substitute members of committees and sub-committees

- 4.1 As well as allocating seats on committees, the Council may allocate seats in the same manner for substitute members. In the case of sub-committees, the appointing committees will determine the number of substitutes and appoint them. Substitute members must be from the same political group as the absent member. If a substitute member cannot be found from the list of prescribed

substitutes, a temporary substitute may be appointed by the Service Manager (Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer) on receipt of the prescribed form authorised by the relevant group leader. In the case of the full member not being in a group, the full member seeking a substitute will authorise the form. Substitutes cannot be appointed for the Cabinet.

- 4.2 When the Council (or a Committee) wishes to appoint substitutes to a Committee (or Sub-Committee) it will adhere to the rules of political proportionality, subject to the total number of substitutes being no more than half of the total number of Members of the Committee (or Sub-Committee).
- 4.3 The powers and duties of substitutes are set out in the Committee Procedure Rules.

5. Quorum

- 5.1 If, at the start of a meeting or during a meeting of the Council there are not at least one quarter of the current number of members present, the Chairman will adjourn the meeting.
- 5.2 Consideration of any business not dealt with will be adjourned to a date and time fixed by the Chairman or to the next ordinary meeting of the Council if a meeting is not fixed to consider the adjourned business.

6. Public question time

General

- 6.1 At each ordinary meeting of the Council, members of the public who live or work in the District may put questions about the work of the Council to members of the Cabinet or any Committee. 30 minutes will be set aside for this. 30 minutes will also be set aside for questions at extraordinary meetings of the Council, but must be limited to the business to be transacted at that meeting.
- 6.2 A person who wishes to speak must register at least fifteen minutes before the time the meeting is scheduled to start. This can be done online by sending the request to democratic.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk or telephoning 01284 757176/01638 719363 or in person by telling the committee administrator present at the meeting.
- 6.3 Written questions, detailing the full question to be asked, may be submitted by members of the public to the Service Manager (Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer) no later than 10.00 am on the previous working day to the meeting of the Council.

Order of questions

- 6.4 Questions will be asked in the order in which notice of them was received, except that the Chairman may group together similar questions.

Time limits

- 6.5 Each person may ask one question only. A total of five minutes will be allowed for the question to be put and answered. One supplementary question will be allowed provided that it arises directly from the reply and the overall time limit of five minutes is not exceeded. The member to whom the question is directed may refer it to another member or may choose to give a written response. A written response will be provided if the member to whom the question was directed is not present at the meeting and it cannot be answered by another member.
- 6.6 If no questions are received or all the questions are dealt with in less than 30 minutes, the Council will move immediately to the next business.

Scope of Questions

- 6.7 The Service Manager (Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer), in respect of any question notified before the meeting, or the Chairman, in respect of any question notified at the meeting, may reject a question if it:-
- (a) is not about a matter for which the Council has a responsibility or which affects the District;
 - (b) is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
 - (c) is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
 - (d) requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

Record of Questions and answers

- 6.8 All questions and answers under Public Question Time will be summarised in the minutes of the meeting. The summary for rejected questions will include the reasons for rejection.

Written Answers

- 6.9 As well as being sent to the person asking the question, written answers will be distributed to all councillors and published on the Council's website.

7. Recording of council meetings

- 7.1 The Council usually makes its own recording of Council meetings.

The audio-visual recording is retained for 12 months after the minutes of the meeting are approved. Requests in relation to these recordings can be made under the Freedom of Information Act.

- 7.2 Arrangements for the public to film/record and for the use of social media at meetings are set out in the Access to Information Rules.

8. Questions by members

On the Leader's Statement

- 8.1 At each ordinary meeting of the Council the Leader of the Council will submit a report (the Leader's Statement) summarising important developments and activities since the preceding meeting of the Council.
- 8.2 The Leader will introduce the statement and members may ask the Leader questions on the content of both his introductory remarks and the written statement itself. All questions will be answered immediately by the Leader or by the relevant Cabinet Member if the Leader refers any question to him or her, unless sufficient information to give an answer is not available. In these circumstances the member asking the question will receive a response in writing within five working days of the Council meeting at which the question was asked. The response will be distributed to all members and published on the Council's website.
- 8.3 A total of 30 minutes will be allowed for questions and responses. There will be a limit of five minutes for each question to be asked and answered. The member asking the original question may put a supplementary question arising from the reply so long as the five minute limit is not exceeded.

Questions on notice at Council

- 8.4 Subject to paragraph 8.5 below, a member may submit in writing to the Service Manager (Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer) a question on notice for:-

- (a) the Chairman; or
- (b) the Leader or any member of the Cabinet; or
- (c) the Chairman of any Committee or Sub-Committee

on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affects the administrative area of the Council, or part of it, or the inhabitants of that area.

- 8.5 A Member may ask only one question on notice under 8.4 at each Council meeting and:-

- (a) must submit it in writing to the Service Manager (Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer) no later than noon seven

working days before the meeting, not counting the day of the meeting; or

- (b) if the question is urgent and the member has the consent of the member to whom the question is to be put, must submit it in writing to the Service Manager (Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer) by 11am on the day of the meeting.

8.6 Every question on notice will be answered without discussion. The member who is asked the question on notice may ask another member to answer. An answer may take the form of:-

- (a) a direct oral answer summarised in the minutes;
- (b) where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
- (c) where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally at the meeting, a written answer sent by the appropriate officer and/or relevant member to all members within five working days of the Council meeting.

8.7 A member asking a question on notice under paragraph 8.4 may ask one supplementary question, without notice, of a member to whom the first question was asked. The supplementary question must arise directly from the original question or the reply. The total time allowed for each question, including any supplementary question, to be put and answered will be ten minutes.

8.8 If the member who gave notice of the question is not present at the meeting, any other member may ask that question but if that does not occur, the Chairman shall proceed to the next item of business. The question shall be deemed to have been withdrawn and may not be asked unless notice is given again in accordance with 8.4 above.

9. Motions which need written notice

9.1 Except for motions which can be moved without notice under section 10 of these Rules, written notice of every motion must be delivered to the Service Manager (Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer) no later than noon seven working days before the meeting, not counting the day of the meeting. Motions must be about matters for which the Council has a responsibility or which affect the administrative area of the Council or part of it or the inhabitants of that area.

9.2 Each member may put one motion on notice at each Council meeting.

9.3 All motions on notice received under 9.1 will be set out in the agenda in the order in which they have been received.

9.4 A Member may withdraw a motion on notice at any time.

- 9.5 A motion on notice under 9.1 can be moved at the meeting by any member. If the motion on notice is not moved, it will be treated as withdrawn and may not be moved without another notice in accordance with 9.1 above.
- 9.6 Any motion on notice under paragraph 9.1 of these Rules, on being moved and seconded, will usually, without discussion, be referred to the appropriate forum for consideration. The Chairman may, if he/she considers it appropriate, allow the motion to be dealt with at the meeting at which it is moved and seconded provided that the motion, if carried, would not involve the Council in expenditure not included in the Council's approved revenue or capital budget.

10. Motions and amendments which may be moved without notice

- 10.1 The following motions and amendments may be moved without notice:-
- (a) to appoint a Chairman of the meeting at which the motion is moved;
 - (b) in relation to the accuracy of the minutes;
 - (c) to change the order of business on the agenda;
 - (d) to receive the reports or adopt the recommendations of the Cabinet or Committees, or reports and recommendations of officers, and any consequent resolutions;
 - (e) to refer something to an appropriate body or individual;
 - (f) to appoint a Committee or Member arising from an item on the summons for the meeting;
 - (g) to withdraw a motion;
 - (h) to extend the time limit for speeches;
 - (i) to amend a motion;
 - (j) to proceed to the next business;
 - (k) to vote on a motion;
 - (l) to vote on an amendment;
 - (m) to adjourn a debate;
 - (n) to adjourn a meeting;
 - (o) to suspend a particular Council procedure rule;
 - (p) to exclude or readmit the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Rules;
 - (q) to direct that a Member named under rule 17.3 be not further heard or to exclude them from the meeting under rule 17.4; and
 - (r) to give the consent of the Council where its consent is required by this Constitution.
- 10.2 A motion by the Chairman under paragraph 10.1(p) of these Rules, to exclude the public for an item of business, will be dealt with before any other motion on that item and will be voted on without discussion.

11. Rules of debate

11.1 No discussion until motion or amendment seconded

A motion or amendment will not be discussed or recorded in the minutes unless it has been proposed and seconded.

11.2 Motion may need to be in writing

If the Chairman requires, the motion will be put in writing before it is further discussed.

11.3 Seconders' speech

When seconding a motion or an amendment, a Member may reserve the right to speak at a later point in the debate.

11.4 Content and length of speeches

11.4.1 Speeches must be directed to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or point of order.

11.4.2 No speech will be longer than five minutes, except as allowed by the Council following a motion moved and carried under rule 10.1(h), and will be about the matter under discussion.

11.4.3 The five minutes time limit will not apply to a member proposing a motion, or an amendment to a motion, who will be allowed to speak for no longer than ten minutes.

11.5 When a member may speak again

A member who has spoken on a motion may not speak again whilst it is the subject of debate, except:-

- (a) to speak once on an amendment moved by another member;
- (b) to move an amendment;
- (c) to move a further amendment (if the motion has been amended since he/she last spoke);
- (d) if his/her first speech was on an amendment moved by another member, to speak on the main issue (whether or not the amendment on which he/she spoke was carried);
- (e) in exercise of a right of reply in accordance with paragraph 11.9 of those rules;
- (f) on a point of order in accordance with 11.12 below; and
- (g) by way of personal explanation in accordance with 11.13 below.

11.6 Amendments to motions

(a) An amendment to a motion must be relevant to the motion and will either be:-

- (i) to refer the matter to an appropriate body, forum, or individual for consideration or reconsideration;
- (ii) to leave out words;
- (iii) to leave out words and insert or add others; or
- (iv) to insert or add words;

as long as the effect of (ii) to (iv) is not to cancel the effect of the motion.

- (b) Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at any one time. No further amendment may be moved until the amendment under consideration has been dealt with.
- (c) If an amendment is lost, other amendments to the original motion may be moved.
- (d) If an amendment is carried, the motion, as amended, will take the place of the original motion and will become the actual motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- (e) After an amendment has been carried, the Chairman will read out the amended motion before accepting any further amendments, or if there are none, before putting it to the vote.

11.7 Alteration of motion

A Member may, with the agreement of the Chairman and without discussion:-

- (a) change a motion of which he/she has given notice under rule 9; or
- (b) with the agreement of his/her seconder, change a motion which he/she has moved;
- (c) but only alterations which could be made as an amendment in accordance with paragraph 11.6(a) of these Rules may be made.

11.8 Withdrawal of motion

- (a) A motion or an amendment may be withdrawn by the mover, but only with the consent of the seconder and the Chairman, which will be given without discussion.
- (b) No member may speak on the motion after the mover has asked for consent to withdraw it, unless consent is not given.

11.9 Right to reply

- (a) The mover of a motion has a right to reply at the end of the debate on the motion, immediately before it is put to the vote.
- (b) If an amendment is moved, the mover of the original motion also has the right of reply at the end of the debate on the amendment, but may not otherwise speak on it.
- (c) The mover of the amendment has no right of reply to the debate on his or her amendment.
- (d) A reply under this paragraph will be confined to matters raised in the debate on the motion or amendment.
- (e) After every reply to which this rule refers, a vote will be taken without further discussion.

11.10 Motions which may be moved during a debate

11.10.1 When a motion is being discussed, no other motion may be moved except the following (non-closure) motions:-

- (a) to withdraw a motion;
- (b) to amend a motion;
- (c) that the subject of debate:-
 - (i) be referred to the appropriate forum for consideration; or
 - (ii) be referred back to the appropriate forum for further consideration.
- (d) to exclude the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Rules; and
- (e) that a Member be not further heard in accordance with paragraph 17.3.1 of these Rules; and
- (f) by the Chairman, in accordance with paragraph 17.4.1 of these Rules, that a named Member leave the meeting.

11.10.2 Any of the motions under paragraph 11.10.1 of these Rules will not take away from the mover of the original motion the right to reply.

11.11 Closure motions which may be moved during a debate

- (a) A Member may move, without comment, any of the following closure motions at the end of a speech of another member:-
 - (i) to move to the next business;
 - (ii) that the question be put;
 - (iii) to adjourn the debate; or
 - (iv) to adjourn the meeting.
- (b) If a motion "to move the next business" or "that the question be put" is seconded and the Chairman thinks the item has been sufficiently discussed, he/she will put the closure motion to the vote. If it is passed, the Chairman will give the mover of the original motion a right of reply before putting that original motion to the vote.
- (c) If a motion "to adjourn the debate" or "to adjourn the meeting" is seconded and the Chairman thinks the item has not been sufficiently discussed and cannot reasonably be so discussed on that occasion, he/she will put the closure motion to the vote without giving the mover of the original motion the right of reply.

11.12 Point of order

- 11.12.1 A member may ask to make a point of order at any time and will have the right to be heard at once, but will stay silent until asked by the Chairman to speak.
- 11.12.2 A point of order will only be about a claimed breach of a provision of these Council Procedure Rules or of law; and the member will indicate the paragraph(s) or law and the way in which he/she considers it has been broken.
- 11.12.3 The ruling of the Chairman on the matter will be final and will not be open to discussion.

11.13 Personal explanation

- 11.13.1 A member may ask to give a personal explanation at any time and will have the right to be heard at once, but will stay silent until asked by the Chairman to speak.
- 11.13.2 A personal explanation will be confined to some material part of an earlier speech by the member which may appear to have been misunderstood in a later stage of the debate.
- 11.13.3 The ruling of the Chairman on the admissibility of a personal explanation will be final.

12. Previous decisions and motions

12.1 Motion to rescind a previous decision

A motion to overturn a decision made at a meeting of the Council within the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion is signed by at least seven members. Once the motion is dealt with, no member can propose a similar motion for six months.

12.2 The restrictions contained in 12.1 do not apply to:

- (a) A recommendation contained in a referral from Cabinet or any Committee to the Council;
- (b) A recommendation contained in a report presented individually or collectively by Chief Officers.

12.3 Motion similar to one previously rejected

A motion or amendment which means the same or largely the same as one that has been rejected at a meeting of Council in the past six months cannot be moved unless the notice of motion or amendment is signed by at least seven members. Once the motion or amendment is dealt with, no member can propose a similar motion or amendment for six months.

13. Voting

13.1 Simple majority

Unless this Constitution provides otherwise, any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those Members voting and present at the time the question was put.

13.2 Chairman's casting vote

- 13.2.1 If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the Chairman may exercise a second or casting vote. There will be no restriction on how the Chairman chooses to exercise a casting vote.
- 13.2.2 In the case of the Chairman refraining from exercising a second vote the motion or amendment being voted on will not be carried.

13.3 Show of hands

Unless a recorded vote is demanded under paragraph 13.4.1 or required under paragraph 13.4.2 of the Rules, or there is a vote by

voting papers in accordance with Appendix 1 below, the Chairman will take the vote by show of hands, or if there is no dissent, by the affirmation of the meeting.

13.4 Recorded vote

13.4.1 If, before a vote is taken, a member asks that the voting be recorded and the request is supported by four other members (who will show their support by standing up):-

- (a) the officer advising the Chairman at the meeting will call the name of each member present at the meeting;
- (b) the member will say whether he or she is for or against the motion or is abstaining; and
- (c) each member's response will be recorded in the minutes.

13.4.2 There will also be a recorded vote when required by law. This includes that a recorded vote will be required at a meeting of the Council on motions, amendments or substantive motions relating to the approval of the budget or setting of council tax, whereby there shall be recorded in the minutes the names of the Members who cast a vote for the motion/amendment or against the motion/amendment or who abstained from voting. As this is a mandatory standing order under the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) Regulations 2001, it cannot be suspended under Council Procedure Rule 19.1

13.5 Right to require individual vote to be recorded

Where any member so requires, immediately after a vote has been taken on any matter, the minutes must record whether that member voted for or against or abstained.

13.6 Voting on appointments (*if procedure under Appendix 1 is not used*)

13.6.1 If there are more than two people nominated for any position to be filled and there is not an overall majority of votes in favour of one person, then the name of the person (or persons) with the fewest votes will be taken off the list and a new vote taken;

13.6.2 In the event that the removal of persons jointly having fewest of votes would result in only one candidate remaining, the above provision will not apply and the Chief Executive (or his/her representative) will draw lots to determine which of the candidates with fewest votes will proceed to the next round;

13.6.3 Where more than one position is contested (for example, there are to be two Vice-Chairmen of a committee) each position will be voted on separately; and

13.6.4 In the event of there being an equality of votes for the final two candidates, lots will be drawn by the Chief

Executive (or his/her representative) to decide which person is elected.

14. Minutes

14.1 Approval and signing

- (a) The Chairman will sign the minutes of the proceedings, once they are confirmed as a correct record, at the next suitable meeting.
- (b) In this regard, the Chairman will seek a mover and seconder for the motion "*that the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on*" be confirmed and signed as a correct record".
- (c) There will be no discussion on the minutes, except by way of a motion upon their accuracy.

14.2 No requirement to sign minutes of previous meeting at extraordinary or special meeting

The minutes of the preceding meeting of the Council will not be submitted to an extraordinary or special meeting of the Council for approval but will be submitted to the next ordinary meeting.

15. Record of attendance

- 15.1 All Members present during the whole or part of a meeting will, before the conclusion of such meeting, sign their names on the Attendance Register provided.

16. Exclusion of public

- 16.1 If a matter may fall within the list of exempt or confidential information set out in Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the matter will not be discussed until the Council has decided whether the public should be excluded from the meeting.
- 16.2 Members of the public may only be excluded either in accordance with the Access to Information Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution or paragraph 18 (Disturbance by Public) of these Rules.

17. Members' conduct

17.1 One member to speak at a time

- (a) When speaking, a member will sit at his/her place and address the Chairman. If two or more members indicate to speak at the same time, the Chairman will call on one to speak; and
- (b) While a member is speaking, all other members will remain silent unless asking to make a point of order or of personal explanation.

17.2 Respect for the chair

Whenever the Chairman rises during a debate the member then speaking will stop speaking and the Council will be silent.

17.3 Member not to be heard further

17.3.1 If, at a meeting, any member, in the opinion of the Chairman, repeatedly ignores the Chairman's ruling or behaves irregularly, improperly or offensively, or wilfully obstructs the business of the Council, the Chairman or any other member may move "*That the member named be not further heard*" and the motion, if seconded, will be voted on without discussion.

17.4 Continuing misconduct of a named member

17.4.1 If the member named continues to behave improperly after a motion in accordance with paragraph 17.3 is carried, the Chairman will move a motion that either:-
(a) the meeting be adjourned for however long the Chairman states; or
(b) the member named leave the meeting.
If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

17.4.2 If, after a motion under paragraph 17.4.1 of these Rules has been carried, the member named does not leave the meeting, the Chairman may order the removal of the member and may adjourn the meeting without debate or resolution to enable removal to take place.

17.5 General disturbance

In the event of general disturbance among the members which, in the opinion of the Chairman, makes it impossible to carry on the meeting, the Chairman may move a motion which will be voted on without seconding or discussion, to adjourn the meeting for however long the Chairman states.

17.6 Interpretation of rules - ruling of Chairman not to be challenged

The decision of the Chairman about the meaning or use of any of these Rules, or about any proceedings of the Council, is final and may not be challenged.

17.7 Interests of members in matters under discussion

Members must observe the rules in the Members' Code of Conduct in Part 5 of this constitution. Any member declaring a disclosable pecuniary interest must leave the room where the meeting is being held for as long as the matter is being considered.

18. Disturbance by public

18.1 Removal of member of the public

If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings of any meeting, the Chairman will warn the person concerned not to interrupt. If the interruption is repeated, the Chairman will order the removal of that person from the meeting room. The Chairman may without debate or resolution adjourn the meeting to allow removal to take place.

18.2 Clearance of part of meeting room

In the case of general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public the Chairman will give a warning and if the disturbance continues will order that part to be cleared, but may identify persons who may remain. The Chairman may without debate or resolution adjourn the meeting to allow clearance to take place.

18.3 No re-admittance for those removed

In the case of paragraphs 18.1 and 18.2 above, any member of the public removed from a meeting following a disturbance will not be re-admitted during the remainder of that meeting.

19. Suspension and amendment of Council procedure rules

19.1 Suspension

All of these Council Rules of Procedure except Rule 13.4 and 14.1 may be suspended by motion on notice (in accordance with paragraph 9.1 of these Rules) or without notice under if at least one half of the whole number of members of the Council are present. Suspension can only be for the whole or part of the meeting at which they are suspended.

19.2 Amendment

Any motion to add to, vary or revoke these Council Rules of Procedure will, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council with a report and recommendation from the appropriate forum/officer.

20. Custody of seal

- 20.1 The Common Seal of the Council will be kept by the Assistant Director (HR, Legal and Democratic Services).

21. Arms of the Council – use or reproduction

- 21.1 Any application to use or reproduce the Arms granted to the Council will be referred to the Assistant Director (HR, Legal and Democratic Services), in consultation with the Chairman, and that officer will refuse or grant permission, or refer the application to the Council for a decision.