

West Suffolk Council

Committee Procedure Rules

1. Terms of reference

- 1.1 The terms of reference of Committees will be approved by the Cabinet or Council as appropriate.
- 1.2 Every Committee will be able to propose changes to its own terms of reference for consideration by the Cabinet or Council.

2. Time and place of meetings

- 2.1 Committee and Sub-Committee meetings shall take place on the dates and at the times set out in the Calendar of Meetings approved by Council before the start of each civic year, except that:-

- a) The Members of any Committee or Sub-Committee may resolve to hold the meetings at a time that is different from that in the calendar, but is the same for every meeting.
- b) The Chair, after appropriate consultation and before the publication of the agenda for any given meeting, may alter the date, time or place of any meeting if, in their opinion, it would assist the efficient conduct of the committee or Sub-Committee's business.
- c) Meetings may also take place virtually with the consent of the Chair. Where a meeting is taking place virtually, any reference in these procedures to a meeting or place of meeting includes reference to electronic, digital or virtual locations. Any reference to attendance includes attendance in person at a location, or remote attendance, where the Member or person is able to see and/or hear and contribute to proceedings by virtual means.

but in all cases regard will be had to the compatibility of the date, time or place proposed with the right of the public to attend.

- 2.2 An extraordinary meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee may be called by:-
 - a) The Chair or in their absence, the Vice-Chair; or
 - b) By any three Members of the Committee or Sub-Committee giving written notice to the Chief Executive specifying the business to be transacted.
- 2.3 A Chair may cancel a Committee or Sub-Committee meeting if they consider that there is insufficient business to transact or that it would assist the efficient conduct of the Committee or Sub-Committee's business.

3. Publication and distribution of agendas

- 3.1 Notice of the time and place of any meeting will be published in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules.
- 3.2 Unless convened at shorter notice, at least five clear days before a meeting, the agenda will be published electronically and made available to the public and Members.
- 3.3 The agenda will give the date, time and place of each meeting and specify the business to be transacted, and will be accompanied by such reports as are available.
- 3.4 The validity of a meeting will not be affected by a Member being unable to access the agenda and reports.
- 3.4 Informal meetings or Panels will not be covered by the Rules in this section.

4. Quorum

- 4.1 The quorum of Committees, Sub-Committees, Working Parties and Panels shall not be less than three Members, or one quarter of the total membership, whichever is the greater, and will be as determined by the Monitoring Officer, having regard to that principle.
- 4.2 No business will be dealt with unless the Committee or Sub-Committee is quorate. Any items of business that cannot be dealt with because the meeting is or becomes inquorate shall stand adjourned for consideration at the next ordinary meeting of the Committee or Sub-committee unless:-
 - a) The Chair and Leader agree a date and time for the meeting to continue; or
 - b) An extraordinary meeting is called in accordance with Rule 2.2 above; or
 - c) The remaining items of business are for information only and do not require a formal decision.
- 4.3 A Committee or Sub-Committee may still debate the substance of items on their agenda even if not quorate. However, they may not make any decisions on any item.

5. Attendance register

- 5.1 All Members present during the whole or part of a meeting that takes place at the Council Offices will, before the conclusion of such meeting, sign their names on the Attendance Register provided. Where a meeting takes place virtually, the Democratic Services Officer shall record the Members in attendance.

6. Election of chairs and vice-chairs of committees and sub-committees

- 6.1 Except in the case of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee (whose Chair and Vice-Chair are appointed by the Council), every Committee and every Sub-Committee will, as its first business as a newly appointed Committee following each Annual Meeting of the Council, elect a Chair and Vice-Chair.
- 6.2 Except in an ordinary election year, the Members who were Chair and Vice-Chair prior to the Annual Meeting will, if still in office and Members of the relevant Committee or Sub-Committee, remain in post until immediately prior to its first meeting after the Annual Meeting. If the Council cancels, defers or delays the Annual Meeting, the Members, the Chair and the Vice-Chair, shall remain in post until such time that a successor is appointed.
- 6.3 Unless otherwise stated, the Chair and Vice-Chair of every Committee and Sub-Committee will be elected Members of the Council.

7. Order of business

- 7.1 Unless changed in accordance with Rule 7.2 below the order of business at Committee and Sub-Committee meetings will be:-
- (a) To elect a Chair or to choose a Member to preside if the Chair and Vice-Chair are not present.
 - (b) To deal with any business required by law to be dealt with first.
 - (c) Declaration of substitutions.
 - (d) Apologies for absence.
 - (e) To confirm as a correct record and sign available minutes from previous meetings.
 - (f) Declarations of Interest.
 - (g) Public speaking in accordance with Rule 11 below.
 - (h) To receive any petitions in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme.
 - (i) To deal with any business remaining from the last meeting in accordance with Rule 4.2 below.
 - (j) To receive and consider any items arising from Panels, Working Groups or Sub-Committees appointed by the Committee.
 - (k) Other business as set out on the agenda.
 - (l) Agenda items requested by Members in accordance with Rules 13 and 14 below (Questions on notice and Motions which need written notice).
 - (m) To consider the date and time of the next meeting and any proposals for future agenda items under Rule 12 below.
 - (n) To consider any business which, by reason of special circumstances should in the opinion of the Chair, be

considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency. The special circumstances concerned shall be specified in the minutes of that meeting.

7.2 The order of business except for items (a) to (e) above may be changed:-

- (a) Before or at a meeting, as the Chair sees fit; or
- (b) By a resolution of the meeting passed on a motion under Rules 14 or 15.1(c) below.

8. Chairing a meeting

8.1 Subject to paragraph 8.3 below, where the Chair is not present the Vice-Chair will, if present, chair the meeting.

8.2 If the Chair and Vice-Chair are not present at a meeting, the Members present will choose one of their number to chair the meeting.

8.3 If, after the start of a meeting:-

- (a) The Chair arrives; or
- (b) A Vice-Chair arrives when the Chair is not present, they will take the chair of the meeting after any item which is being discussed when they arrive has been dealt with.

9. Substitutes Powers and Duties

9.1 Once a substitute has been declared, they will have the ordinary status of a Member present in their own right and will not be the delegate of the original Member. They will not be able to exercise any special powers or duties exercisable by the person for whom they are substituting. Any disqualification of the original Member to speak or vote, however, is not transferred to the substitute. Conversely, if a substitute Member is disqualified to speak or vote on a particular item, they must declare it.

9.2 If an original Member arrives at a meeting at which a substitute has already been declared, the substitute will remain the Member entitled to speak and vote. Once a substitution has been declared, the original Member will not be entitled to attend the meeting, either as a Member of the Committee or Sub-Committee or 'by invitation' (*this is because if a substitution is declared it is on the pre-supposition that the original Member has declared themselves unable to attend the meeting*).

9.3 The procedure for the appointment of temporary substitutes will be in accordance with the Council Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of this Constitution.

Substitution Rules

- 9.4 At the commencement of each meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee (or upon arrival, if arriving late) each Member substituting for another Member will declare the said substitution.
- 9.5 Once a substitute has been declared as present in place of a Member for a meeting of that Committee or Sub-Committee, that substitute will take the place of the Member and will be able to speak and vote (subject to the declaration of any interests, as is usual practice).
- 9.6 Once a substitute has declared that they are substituting for another Member, the original Member will not be able to replace the substitute Member during the course of the meeting. If the substitute Member leaves the meeting during the course of the meeting, the original Member will not be allowed to attend and vote in place of the substitute.
- 9.7 If, at the commencement of the meeting, the original Member is present, then a substitution cannot take place.
- 9.8 Any original Member of a Committee may seek a substitute from any of those on the appointed list of substitutes for that Committee or Sub-Committee, provided that they are from the same political group to maintain political balance.
- 9.9 No substitute Member has the automatic right to substitute for another Member who is not present. It is for the original Member to select a substitute in accordance with paragraph 9.8 above. However, where the original Member is incapacitated, due to sickness or hospitalisation and is, therefore, unable to appoint a substitute Member themselves, then their Group Leader will be asked to nominate a Member from the same political group to substitute for the original Member.
- 9.10 Substitute Members cannot be appointed to attend meetings for a Member who ceases to be a member of the Council (ie by way of resignation, disqualification or death in service). Instead, the relevant seat shall be carried as a vacancy on the Committee until an alternative appointment is made.

10. Attending and speaking at committee and sub-committee meetings

- 10.1 Except as provided in Rules 10.2 to 10.5 below, a Member of the Council shall not be entitled to speak or vote at a meeting of any Committee or Sub-Committee unless they are a Member of that Committee or Sub-Committee.
- 10.2 Where a motion stands referred to a Committee or Sub-Committee the mover and/or the seconder of the motion may attend the

meeting which is to consider the motion and take part in any discussion about it, but cannot vote unless a Member of the Committee or Sub-Committee.

- 10.3 Local Members have the right to speak at a Committee meeting which is discussing matters that affect or relate to their Ward. However, this must comply with any requirements that are set out in these Procedure Rules or as may be agreed by the Committee in question.
- 10.4 A Member who is not a member of a Committee or Sub-Committee but who wishes to speak at a meeting of that body will be permitted to do so if they have indicated in advance to the Chair that they wish to speak on a particular agenda item.
- 10.5 The Chair may at their discretion allow non-members of the Committee or Sub-Committee to speak in situations not falling within paragraphs 10.2 to 10.4 above.

11. Public speaking

- 11.1 Members of the public who live or work in the District are welcome to speak at any open meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee. They may ask a question or make a statement on any item on the agenda for that meeting.
- 11.2 Where a meeting takes place at the Council Offices, a person who wishes to speak must register at least fifteen minutes before the time the meeting is scheduled to start. If the meeting takes place virtually, a person who wishes to speak must register by 9am the last working day before the day of the meeting. 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. The Chair of the Committee has discretion to allow anyone who has not registered to be able to speak.
- 11.3 The Monitoring Officer in respect of any question notified before the meeting, or the Chair, 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.
- 11.4 Where, because a meeting takes place virtually, a member of the public cannot attend the meeting, they may submit a written question or statement to Democratic Services by midday on the day

of the meeting. This shall be read out by a Democratic Services Officer at the meeting.

- 11.5 There will be an overall time limit of 15 minutes for public speaking, which may be extended at the Chair's discretion. Speakers will be called in the order in which they gave notice. Each person may ask one question or make one statement and will be allowed up to three minutes. If the question can be answered orally at the meeting it will be, and the question and answer will be summarised in the minutes. Questions that cannot be answered immediately will be answered in writing to the questioner, distributed to all Members of the Committee or Sub-Committee and published on the Council's website. If a question is asked and answered within three minutes, the person who asked the question may ask a supplementary question that arises from the reply which may be answered orally or in writing as above.
- 11.6 These public speaking rules do not apply to meetings of the Development Control Committee, as the Committee has its own authority to determine from time to time, its own arrangements for public speaking on applications, and which matters are to be included within those arrangements (see Part 3 – Functions and Responsibilities; Section 2 – Responsibility for Council (Non Executive) Functions; A-Development Control and as set out in the ['Guide to Having a Say on Planning Applications'](#)).
- 11.7 These public speaking rules do not apply to meetings of the Licensing and Regulatory Committee, when the Committee sits as a hearing, in which case the Hearing Procedure Rules will apply (see Part 3 – Functions and Responsibilities; Section 2 – Responsibility for Council Functions; B-Licensing).

12. Agenda items requested by members

- 12.1 Any Member of a Committee or Sub-Committee may propose under Rule 7.1(l) above, an item to be considered at a future meeting of that Committee or Sub-Committee. The Member shall give notice of such items to the Chair and to the Monitoring Officer no later than 12 noon, seven working days before the date of the meeting (not including the day of the meeting) together with a brief explanation of the item and its purpose, which will then be published on the agenda.
- 12.2 To be eligible for consideration, the item proposed must fall within the terms of reference or the delegated powers of the Committee or Sub-Committee.
- 12.3 The Member shall present their proposal to the Committee or Sub-Committee and may be questioned on it before the Committee or Sub-Committee resolves whether or not to refer the matter to a future meeting for report and consideration in the usual way.

Questions on notice

13.1 Subject to paragraph 13.5 below, a Member may submit in writing to the Monitoring Officer a question on notice for:-

- (a) The Chair; or
- (b) The Chair of any Sub-Committee

on any matter in relation to which the Committee or Sub-Committee has powers or duties.

13.2 A Member may ask only one question on notice under paragraph 13.1 above at each meeting and:-

- a) Must submit it in writing to the Monitoring Officer no later than 12 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 Monitoring Officer by 12 noon on the working day before the meeting.

13.3 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 meeting.

13.4 A Member asking a question on notice under paragraph 13.1 above, 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.

13.5 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 Chair 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 paragraph 13.1 above.

14. Motions which need written notice

- 14.1 Except for motions which can be moved without notice under Rule 15 below, written notice of every motion must be delivered to the Monitoring Officer no later than 12 noon, seven working days before the meeting, not counting the day of the meeting. Motions must be about matters for which the Committee or Sub-Committee has a responsibility.
- 14.2 Each Member may put one motion on notice at each meeting.
- 14.3 All motions on notice received under paragraph 14.1 above, will be set out in the agenda in the order in which they have been received.
- 14.4 A Member may withdraw a motion on notice at any time.
- 14.5 A motion on notice under paragraph 14.1 above, 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 paragraph 14.1 above.
- 14.6 Any motion on notice under paragraph 14.1 above, on being moved and seconded, will usually, without discussion, be referred to a future meeting for report and consideration. The Chair may, if they consider 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:
- (a) Involve the Council incurring expenditure not included in the Council's approved revenue or capital budget.
 - (b) Not involve the Council being committed to take action which would usually require public consultation or a statutory process to be followed prior to it being made

15. Motions and amendments which may be moved without notice

- 15.1 The following motions and amendments may be moved without notice:-
- (a) To appoint a Chair 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 any Sub-Committees, or reports and recommendations of Officers and any consequent resolutions.
 - (e) To refer something to an appropriate body or individual.
 - (f) To withdraw a motion.
 - (g) To extend the time limit for speeches.
 - (h) To suspend any of these Rules for the whole or part of the meeting.

- (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 exclude or re-admit the public and press in accordance with the Access to Information Rules.
- (p) To direct that a Member named under Rule 20.3 below, be not further heard or to exclude them from the meeting under Rule 20.4 below.

15.2 A motion by the Chair under paragraph 15.1(o) below 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.

16. Rules of debate

16.1 The Chair has authority to manage the meeting, debate and decision making in a manner they consider most appropriate to reach a clear conclusion on items on the agenda. With this in mind, for each substantive item of business, the following order will normally apply:-

- (a) Presentation of report by Chair, Cabinet Member or Officer, as deemed appropriate.
- (b) Contributions by Members who have been invited by the Chair to also speak on the report. (Note: These Members may also be permitted to speak again at the discretion of the Chair).
- (c) Contributions and discussions by Members of the Committee. The Chair may invite the proposer (or other appropriate persons) to respond to questions raised by Members during discussion.
- (d) Except in relation to non-regulatory Committees, the Chair will support the Committee to formulate recommendations or decisions, as appropriate. The recommendation or decision shall then be subject to a formal vote.
- (e) In relation to regulatory Committees, the Chair shall then invite a formal motion, which must be proposed and seconded. It would usually be expected that the motion would be immediately voted upon. If necessary to reach a conclusion on a matter, a subsequent motion may then be proposed.

16.2 It is expected that non-regulatory Committees will, as far as possible, seek to reach a consensus after discussion, without formal

rules of debate. However, where there are differences of view which are unlikely to be resolved by consensus, the Chair may invite a formal motion, including seconding thereof, and after debate, put the matter to a vote. Amendments may be moved during the debate, although with the consent of the meeting, the Chair may choose to handle these informally where this is likely to assist the Committee in reaching an agreed conclusion.

- 16.3 On occasion and again with the consent of the meeting, the Chair may also apply the rules of debate to the handling of a recommendation in an Officer's report.
- 16.4 Where the formal rules of debate are applied to the proceedings in a meeting, paragraph 11 of the Council Procedure Rules contained within this Constitution shall apply.
- 16.5 The Chair shall control the meeting and may in particular:
- (a) Require a Councillor to restrict their speech to the matter under debate.
 - (b) Stop a Councillor from speaking if the Chair considered that their speech is irrelevant or is excessively long.
 - (c) Require a Councillor to explain statements they have made or provide examples to support their position.

17. Approval and signing of minutes

- 17.1.1 The Chair will sign the minutes of the proceedings, once they are confirmed as a correct record, at the next suitable meeting.
- 17.1.2 In this regard, the Chair will ask any Members if they have objection to the accuracy of the minutes. If there is no objection, then the Chair shall ask the Committee to verbally confirm they consider the minutes to be a correct record.
- 17.1.3 If there is objection, then the Members raising objection shall be asked to recommend changes to the minutes. The Chair shall then ask the Committee whether any Members object to the proposed amendments. If there is no objection, then the Chair shall ask the Committee to verbally confirm the minutes to be a correct record, subject to the proposed amendment.
- 17.1.4 If a Member(s) object to the proposed amendment, then the Chair shall seek a proposer and seconder for the amendment and then take a vote on the amendment. It is normally expected that only those Members who were present at the meeting to which the minutes relate, would take part in the vote. The Chair shall then seek a proposer

and seconder for the substantive motion in the same manner.

17.1.5 There will be no discussion on the minutes, except by way of a motion upon their accuracy.

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

The minutes of the preceding meeting of the Committee or Sub-Committee may be submitted to an Extraordinary or Special meeting of that body for approval, if convenient and practicable to do so, but otherwise will be submitted to the next ordinary meeting.

17.3 Content of minutes

Recommendations

17.3.1 Every decision of a committee which is not within its delegated authority will be indicated by the word "RECOMMENDED", and will require approval by the appropriate body.

Decisions

17.3.2 Every decision of a Committee which is within its delegated authority will be indicated by the word "RESOLVED".

17.3.3 The recommendations of a meeting of a Sub-Committee will be sent to the next convenient meeting of the parent Committee.

18. Voting

18.1 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.

18.2 Chair's casting vote

18.2.1 The Chair should exercise their casting vote with appropriate caution. A casting vote is only called upon when Members cannot reach a majority and due respect should be given to the lack of consensus. However, the Chair is ultimately entitled to exercise their vote as they consider appropriate.

18.2.2 In the case of the Chairman refraining from exercising a second vote the motion or amendment being voted on will not be carried.

18.3 Show of hands

Where the meeting takes place at the Council Offices, unless a recorded vote is demanded under paragraph 18.4 below of the

Rules, the Chair will take the vote by show of hands, or if there is no dissent, by the affirmation of the meeting.

Where the meeting takes place virtually, the Chair shall determine a voting procedure for the meeting which shall be communicated to each Member prior to the start of the meeting.

18.4 Recorded vote

18.4.1 If, before a vote is taken, a Member asks that the voting be recorded and the request is supported by five other Members who will show their support by a show of hands:-

- (a) The Officer advising the Chair at the meeting will call the name of each Member present at the meeting.
- (b) The Member will say whether they are for or against the motion or is abstaining; and
- (c) Each Member's response will be recorded in the minutes.

18.4.2 There will also be a recorded vote when required by law.

18.5 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.

18.6 Voting on appointments

18.6.1 If there are more than two people nominated for any position to be filled, a vote shall be taken. If 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. This shall be repeated until only one candidate remains with an overall majority.

18.6.2 If, in the scenario that there was a tie for the fewest number of votes and removal of the candidates would mean only one candidate is left, then the Officer advising the Chair at the meeting, will draw lots between those with the fewest votes to determine which of the candidates with the fewest votes will proceed to the next round.

18.6.3 Where more than one position is contested (for example, there are to be two Vice-Chairs of a Committee) each position will be voted on separately.

18.6.4 In the event of there being an equality of votes for the final two candidates, lots will be drawn by the Officer advising the Chair at the meeting to decide which person is elected.

19. Exclusion of public

- 19.1 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 meeting has decided whether the public should be excluded from the meeting.
- 19.2 Members of the public may only be excluded either in accordance with the Access to Information Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution or Rule 21 (Disturbance by Public).

20. Members' conduct

20.1 One member to speak at a time

- (a) When speaking, a Member will sit at their place and address the Chair. If two or more Members indicate to speak at the same time, the Chair will call on one to speak.
- (b) While a Member is speaking, all other Members will remain silent unless asking to make a point of order or of personal explanation.

20.2 Respect for the chair

Whenever the Chair rises during a debate the Member then speaking will stop speaking and the meeting will be silent.

20.3 Member not to be heard further

20.3.1 If, at a meeting, any Member, in the opinion of the Chair, repeatedly ignores the Chair's ruling or behaves irregularly, improperly or offensively, or wilfully obstructs the business of the meeting, the Chair 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.

20.4 Continuing misconduct of a named member

20.4.1 If the Member named continues to behave improperly after a motion in accordance with paragraph 20.3 is carried, the Chair will move a motion that either:-

- (a) The meeting be adjourned for however long the Chair states; or
- (b) The Member named leave the meeting.

If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.

20.4.2 If, after a motion under paragraph 20.4.1 above of these Rules has been carried, the Member named does not leave the meeting, the Chair may order the removal of the Member and may adjourn the meeting without debate or resolution to enable removal to take place.

20.4.3 In respect of virtual meetings, Members shall act in accordance with any protocols set for the meeting for

addressing the chair and bringing to their attention that they wish to speak. If, in the opinion of the Chair, a Member acts in a wilfully disruptive manner then the Chair may mute that Member who shall not be heard further unless invited. If that is the case, the Chair shall announce their action to the meeting. If the Member continues to disrupt, the Chair or any other Member shall propose that they are removed from the meeting. Upon seconding, the chair shall seek a vote of Members in accordance with the established protocol for the meeting.

20.5 General disturbance

In the event of general disturbance among the Members which, in the opinion of the Chair, makes it impossible to carry on the meeting, the Chair may stand and declare the meeting adjourned for however long as they state.

20.6 Interpretation of rules - ruling of Chair not to be challenged

The decision of the Chair about the meaning or use of any of these rules, or about any proceedings of the Committee or Sub-committee, is final and may not be challenged.

20.7 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. Where the meeting takes place virtually, any Member declaring a disclosable pecuniary interest must not take part in any discussions or voting on the item.

21. Disturbance by public

21.1 Removal of member of the public

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

21.2 Clearance of part of meeting room

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

21.3 No re-admittance for those removed

In the case of paragraphs 21.1 and 21.2 above, any member of the public removed from a meeting following a disturbance will not be re-admitted during the remainder of that meeting.

22. Suspension and amendment of committee procedure rules

22.1 Suspension

All of these Committee Procedure Rules except Rule 18.4 above (recorded vote) may be suspended by motion on notice (in accordance with Rule 14.1 above) or without notice under if at least one half of the whole number of Members of the Committee or Sub-Committee are present. Suspension can only be for the whole or part of the meeting at which they are suspended.

22.2 Amendment

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