

BISHOPSTOKE PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS and FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

**These Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were adopted
by the Parish Council at its meeting on 23 February 2016**

**D Hillier-Wheal
Clerk to Bishopstoke Parish Council**

BISHOPSTOKE PARISH COUNCIL
STANDING ORDERS
and
FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Amendment Sheet

Amendment No.	Date Incorporated	Subject
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1 Meetings

- 1.1** 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.
- 1.2** When calculating the 3 clear days for the 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, bank holidays or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning shall not count.
- 1.3** 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.
- 1.4** Subject to standing order 1.3 above, members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda.
- 1.5** The period of time is at the Chair's discretion but shall not normally exceed 15 minutes.
- 1.6** Subject to standing order 1.5 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.
- 1.7** In accordance with standing order 1.4 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.
- 1.8** In accordance with standing order 1.7 above, the Chair may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to an employee for a written or oral response.
- 1.9** A record of a public participation session at a meeting shall be included in the minutes of that meeting.
- 1.10** A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The Chair may at any time permit an individual to be seated when speaking.
- 1.11** Any person speaking at a meeting shall address comments made to the Chair.
- 1.12** Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chair shall direct the order of speaking.
- 1.13** As a result of the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, the public may film, photograph, or make an audio recording of a meeting and, may use any other means of enabling persons not present to see or hear the proceedings as they take place, or later.
- 1.14** In accordance with standing order 1.3 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.
- 1.15** Subject to any standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be undertaken by, to, or before the Chair may, in their absence, be undertaken by, to, or before the Vice-Chair.

- 1.16** The Chair, if present, shall preside at a Council meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chair, if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.
- 1.17** Subject to standing order 1.25 below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.
- 1.18** The Chair may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise their casting vote whether or not they gave an original vote. (*See also standing orders 2.9 and 2.10 below.*)
- 1.19** 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 their vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.
- 1.20** The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of Councillors present and absent.
- 1.21** If prior to a meeting a Councillor has submitted reasons for their 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.
- 1.22** The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to Councillors in respect of the entire meeting.
- 1.23** 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 below.*)
- 1.24** No business may be transacted at a full Council meeting unless at least one third of the whole number of Members of the Council are present; in effect five Members. For committees, the quorum is three Members.
- 1.25** If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be adjourned. Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be transacted at a following meeting.
- 1.26** Meetings shall not normally exceed a period of 3 hours.

2. Ordinary Council meetings

See also standing order 1 above

- 2.1** 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.
- 2.2** In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of a Council shall be held on such a day in May as the Council may direct.
- 2.3** If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 7:30pm.
- 2.4** 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.
- 2.5** The election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council.
- 2.6** The Chair of the Council, unless they resign or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until a successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- 2.7** The Vice-Chair of the Council, unless they resign or become disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chair of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.
- 2.8** In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chair of the Council has been elected. The current Chair of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- 2.9** In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the meeting until a new Chair of the Council has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.
- 2.10** Following the election of the Chair of the Council and the Vice-Chair of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows:
 - 2.10.1** In an election year, delivery by Councillors of their declarations of acceptance of office.
 - 2.10.2** 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.
 - 2.10.3** Review by delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, employees and other local authorities.
 - 2.10.4** Review of the terms of reference for committees.
 - 2.10.5** Receipt of nominations to existing committees.
 - 2.10.6** Appointment of any new committees, sub-committees and working groups, confirmation of the terms of reference, the number of members and receipt of nominations to them.

- 2.10.7** Review and adoption of appropriate Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
- 2.10.8** Review of arrangements, including any charters, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities.
- 2.10.9** Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back.
- 2.10.10** In a year of elections, if a Council's period of eligibility to exercise the General Power of Competence expired the day before the annual meeting, to review and make arrangements to reaffirm eligibility.
- 2.10.11** Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment.
- 2.10.12** Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.
- 2.10.13** Review of the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies.
- 2.10.14** Establishing or reviewing the Council's complaints procedure.
- 2.10.15** Establishing or reviewing the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998, as amended.
- 2.10.16** Establishing or reviewing the Council's various policies.
- 2.10.17** Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council for the year ahead.

3 Proper Officer

3.1 The Council's Proper Officer shall be either (i) the Clerk or such other employee as may be nominated by the Council from time to time or (ii) such other employee appointed by the Council to undertake the role of the Proper Officer during the Proper Officer's absence. The Proper Officer and the employee appointed to act as such during the Proper Officer's absence shall fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer in standing orders.

3.2 The Council's Proper Officer shall do the following:

3.2.1 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 and a meeting of a committee or sub-committee at least 3 clear days before the meeting

OR

Upon the Council having first resolved that service of summons on Councillors confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda for a meeting by delivery or post at their residences at least 3 clear days before a meeting is not expedient, electronically serve on Councillors a summons confirming the date, time, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council, a committee or sub-committee at least 3 clear days before the meeting providing any such e-mail contains the electronic signature and title of the Proper Officer.

3.2.2 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).

3.2.3 Subject to standing orders 4.1 – 4.5 below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a Councillor has given written notice at least 7 days before the meeting confirming the intention to withdraw it.

3.2.4 Convene a meeting of Full Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in this office, in accordance with standing order 3.2.1 OR 3.2.2 above.

3.2.5 Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.

3.2.6 Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.

3.2.7 Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from Councillors.

3.2.8 Retain a copy of every Councillor's declaration of interests and any changes to it and keep copies of the same available for inspection.

3.2.9 Keep proper records required before and after meetings.

3.2.10 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.

3.2.11 Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.

- 3.2.12** Manage the organisation, storage and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form.
- 3.2.13** Arrange for legal deeds/documents to be signed by two Councillors and witnessed. (*See also standing orders 14.1 and 14.2.*)
- 3.2.14** 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.
- 3.2.15** Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority.
- 3.2.16** Refer planning applications received by the Council to the Chair or in their absence the Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee.
- 3.2.17** Retain custody of the seal of the Council (if any) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
- 3.2.18** Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in Standing Orders.

4 Motions requiring written notice

- 4.1** In accordance with standing order 3.2.3 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.
- 4.2** The Proper Officer may, before including a motion in the agenda received in accordance with standing order 4.1 above, correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- 4.3** If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 4.1 above is not clear in its meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion submits it in writing to the Proper Officer in clear and certain language at least 7 clear days before the meeting.
- 4.4** If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the Chair 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.
- 4.5** Having consulted the Chair or Councillors pursuant to standing order 4.4 above, the decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
- 4.6** 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 register / file, which shall be open to inspection by all Councillors.
- 4.7** Every motion rejected in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be duly recorded with a note by the Proper Officer giving reasons for its rejection which shall be open to inspection by all Councillors.
- 4.8** 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

5.1 Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice:

- 5.1.1** To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
- 5.1.2** To approve the absences of Councillors.
- 5.1.3** To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 5.1.4** To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 5.1.5** To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
- 5.1.6** To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
- 5.1.7** To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
- 5.1.8** To close or adjourn debate.
- 5.1.9** To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to a sub-committee or an employee.
- 5.1.10** To appoint a committee or sub-committee or any Councillors thereto.
- 5.1.11** To receive nominations to a committee or sub-committee.
- 5.1.12** To dissolve a committee or sub-committee.
- 5.1.13** To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee or sub-committee.
- 5.1.14** To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or a sub-committee or an employee.
- 5.1.15** To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
- 5.1.16** To authorise legal deeds to be signed by two councillors and witnessed. (*See standing orders 14.1 and 14.2 below.*)
- 5.1.17** To authorise the payment of monies.
- 5.1.18** To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
- 5.1.19** To extend the time limit for speeches.
- 5.1.20** To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
- 5.1.21** To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
- 5.1.22** To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders.
- 5.1.23** To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by statute.
- 5.1.24** To adjourn the meeting.

5.1.25 To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.

5.1.26 To answer questions from Councillors.

5.2 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 Chair may direct for it to be dealt with at the present meeting for reasons of urgency or expedience.

6 Rules of debate

- 6.1** Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chair's direction for reasons of expedience.
- 6.2** Subject to standing orders 4.1 – 4.5 above, a motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- 6.3** Subject to standing order 3.2.3 above, a motion included in an agenda not moved by the Councillor who tabled it, may be treated as withdrawn.
- 6.4** A motion to amend an original or substantive motion shall not be considered unless proper notice has been given after the original or substantive motion has been seconded and notice of such amendment, shall, if required by the Chair, be reduced to writing and handed to the Chair who shall determine the order in which they are considered.
- 6.5** Councillors may move amendments to their own motions. If a motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder.
- 6.6** Any amendment to a motion shall be either:
 - 6.6.1** To leave out words.
 - 6.6.2** To add words.
 - 6.6.3** To leave out words and add other words.
- 6.7** A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration.
- 6.8** Only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chair. No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.
- 6.9** Subject to standing order 6.8 above, one or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chair considers this expedient but they shall be voted upon separately.
- 6.10** Pursuant to standing order 6.8 above, the number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a Councillor, is limited to one.
- 6.11** If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chair.
- 6.12** If an amendment is carried, the original motion, as amended, shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- 6.13** The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 3 minutes.
- 6.14** Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply in respect of the substantive motion at the very end of debate and immediately before it is put to the vote.
- 6.15** Subject to standing order 6.13. and 6.14 above, a Councillor may not speak further in respect of any one motion except to speak once on an amendment moved by another Councillor or to make a point of order or to give a personal explanation.

- 6.16** During the debate of a motion, a Councillor may interrupt only on a point of order or a personal explanation and the Councillor who was interrupted shall stop speaking. A Councillor raising a point of order shall identify the standing order which they consider has been breached or specify the irregularity in the meeting they are concerned by.
- 6.17** A point of order shall be decided by the Chair and this decision shall be final.
- 6.18** With the consent of the seconder and/or of the meeting, a motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer. A Councillor shall not speak upon the said motion or amendment unless permission for the withdrawal of the motion or amendment has been refused.
- 6.19** Subject to standing order 6.15 above, when a Councillor's motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except:
- 6.19.1** to amend the motion
 - 6.19.2** to proceed to the next business
 - 6.19.3** to adjourn the debate
 - 6.19.4** to put the motion to a vote
 - 6.19.5** to ask a person to be silent or for them to leave the meeting
 - 6.19.6** to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration
 - 6.19.7** to exclude the public and press
 - 6.19.8** to adjourn the meeting
 - 6.19.9** to suspend any standing order, except those which are mandatory
- 6.20** In respect of standing order 6.19.4 above, the Chair shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote. The Chair shall call upon the mover of the motion under debate to exercise or waive their 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, Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests and Dispensation Procedures

See also standing orders 1.4 – 1.9 above

- 7.1** All Councillors shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council as required by Chapter 7 of Part 1 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 7.2** All Councillors shall undertake training in the Code of Conduct within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.
- 7.3** All Councillors are to declare any relevant pecuniary interest, referred to as a “disclosable pecuniary interest” in the legislation and these are to be registered with the Borough Council’s monitoring officer and displayed on the Parish website.
- 7.4** A Councillor with a disclosable interest must declare it at the meeting whether that interest is registered or unregistered re Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011. If unregistered, it is to be registered within 28 days of disclosure. If it is sensitive, only the fact that there is an interest, not its nature, has to be declared.
- 7.5** Where an interest has been declared, the Councillor must not take any part or further part in any discussion or voting on the matter in question and the Councillor shall be excluded from the meeting unless the matter in hand has been concluded.
- 7.6** Disclosable pecuniary interests are prescribed by the Relevant Authorities (Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 (S1 2012/1464) and are as follows:
- any employment, trade or office carried on for profit or gain
 - any sponsorship, other than from the relevant authority, towards meeting election expenses or carrying out the duties of a Councillor
 - any contract in which the Councillor has a beneficial interest
 - any beneficial interest in land within the Parish
 - any licence to occupy land for a month or longer in the Parish
 - any tenancies where the landlord is the Parish Council
 - any beneficial interest in securities where that body has a place of business or land within the Parish and the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one-hundredth of the total issued share capital or if the share capital is more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class exceeds one-hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class
- 7.7** A copy of the adopted Code of Conduct is at Annex A together with notes on disclosable pecuniary interests and dispensations.

8 Questions

- 8.1** Questions may be asked by a Councillor at an appropriate time during a Council meeting but may or may not be answered at that time.

9 Minutes

- 9.1** 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.
- 9.2** 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 5.1.4 above.
- 9.3** Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the Chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- 9.4** If the Chair of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:
- “The Chair of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the [*Committee name*] held on [*date*] in respect of [*description including agenda item*] were a correct record but their view was not upheld by the majority of the [*Committee name*] and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- 9.5** 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

- 10.1** No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly.
- 10.2** If, in the opinion of the Chair, there has been a breach of standing order 10.1 above, the Chair shall express that opinion and thereafter any Councillor (including the Chair) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.
- 10.3** If a resolution, made in accordance with standing order 10.2 above, is disobeyed, the Chair may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or they may adjourn the meeting.

11 Recession of previous resolutions

- 11.1** 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 3 Councillors of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- 11.2** When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to standing order 11.1 above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

12 Voting on appointments

- 12.1** When 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 Chair's casting vote.

13 Expenditure

- 13.1** Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- 13.2** The Council's financial regulations shall be reviewed at least once a year.
- 13.3** 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 5.1.16 above

- 14.1** A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless the same has been authorised by a resolution.
- 14.2** In accordance with a resolution made under standing order 14.2 above, any two members of the Council may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law, and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.

15 Committees

See also standing order 1 above

- 15.1** The Council may, at its annual meeting, appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as may be necessary, and:
- 15.1.1** Shall determine their terms of reference
 - 15.1.2** May permit committees to determine the dates of their meetings
 - 15.1.3** Shall appoint and determine the term of office of Councillor or non-Councillor members of such a committee (unless the appointment of non-Councillors is prohibited by law) so as to hold office no later than the next annual meeting
 - 15.1.4** May appoint substitute Councillors to a committee whose role is to replace ordinary Councillors at a meeting of a committee if ordinary councillors of the committee have confirmed to the Proper Officer 3 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend
 - 15.1.5** An ordinary member of a committee who has been replaced at a meeting by a substitute member (in accordance with standing order 15.1.4 above) shall not be permitted to participate in debate or vote on business at that meeting and may only speak during any public participation session during the meeting
 - 15.1.6** May in accordance with standing orders, dissolve a committee at any time
- 15.2** Standing Orders for the Planning Committee are at Annex B and for the Finance and General Purposes Committee at Annex C.

16 Sub-Committees

See also standing order 1 above

- 16.1** 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 resolution of the committee.

17 Extraordinary meetings

See also standing order 1 above

- 17.1** The Chair of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.
- 17.2** If the Chair 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.
- 17.3** The Chair of a committee (or a sub-committee) may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or sub-committee at any time.
- 17.4** If the Chair of a committee (or a sub-committee) does not, or refuses to, call an extraordinary meeting within 7 days of having been requested to do so by two Councillors, those two 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 the two Councillors.

18 Advisory Committees and Working Groups

Standing order 1 above does NOT apply

- 18.1** The Council may appoint advisory committees and working groups comprised of a number of Councillors and non-Councillors.
- 18.2** Advisory committees and working groups may consist wholly of persons who are non-Councillors.
- 18.3** Standing orders / terms of reference for the Carnival and Travel Token working groups are at Annex E and F.

19 Accounts and Financial Statement

- 19.1** All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- 19.2** The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each Councillor as soon as practicable after 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year, or more frequently if required, a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments for each quarter and the balances held at the end of a quarter. 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.

20 Estimates / precepts

- 20.1** The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of December, except for the precept requirement which the Council shall approve for the coming financial year at its meeting before the end of January.
- 20.2** Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Responsible Finance Officer a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than November.

21 Canvassing of and recommendations by Councillors

- 21.1** 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.
- 21.2** 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 an appointment or for promotion. 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.
- 21.3** This standing order shall apply to tenders as if the person submitting the tender was a candidate for an appointment.

22 Inspection of documents

- 22.1** 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.

23 Unauthorised activities

- 23.1** Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual Councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council, a committee or a sub-committee:
 - 23.1.1** Inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect, or
 - 23.1.2** Issue orders, instructions or directions

24 Confidential business

- 24.1** Councillors, employees and non-Councillor members of working groups shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware, is of a confidential nature.
- 24.2** A Councillor in breach of the provisions of standing order 24.1 above may be removed from a committee or a sub-committee by a resolution of the Council.

25 General Power of Competence

- 25.1** The General Power of Competence (GPC) was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and in simple terms it gives councils the power to do anything an individual can do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation. The scope, and some limitations, of the General Power are set out in sections 1 to 6 of the Localism Act 2011.
- 25.2** The GPC enables councils to do things which an individual may generally do anywhere in the UK or elsewhere, for a commercial purpose or otherwise, for a charge or without a charge, without the need to demonstrate that it will benefit the authority, its area, or persons resident or present in its area (although in practice councils will want to realise such benefits).
- 25.3** An eligible council is one which has resolved to adopt the GPC, with at least two thirds of its members being declared elected and the Clerk must hold an appropriate qualification (Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012).
- 25.4** There are some limitations on the General Power, either because they are not things which an individual can do or because they are excluded by the Act. The GPC will not: provide councils with new powers to raise tax or precepts or to borrow; enable councils to set charges for mandatory services; impose fines or create offences or byelaws, over and above existing powers to do so; override existing legislation in place before the Localism Act 2011, so-called 'pre-commencement limitations' (however powers enacted after commencement of the GPC will only limit the GPC if this is explicitly stated in the legislation).
- 25.5** Where using the GPC for charging or trading purposes, the recipient should agree to the service being provided, the income from charges should not exceed the cost of provision and, where things are done for commercial purposes, this must be done through a specified type of company.

26 Matters affecting Council employees

- 26.1** If a meeting considers any matter personal to a Council employee, it shall not be considered until the Council OR the appropriate committee OR sub-committee has decided whether or not the press and public should be excluded pursuant to standing order 1.3 above.
- 26.2** The Clerk shall notify the Chair, or in their absence the Vice-Chair, of any absence occasioned by illness or urgency.
- 26.3** The Chair shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and/or appraisal of the Clerk and shall keep a written record of it. The review and/or appraisal shall be reported back and shall be subject to approval by resolution by full Council.
- 26.4** Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Clerk shall contact the Chair or Vice-Chair, in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the full Council.
- 26.5** Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance and disciplinary matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by a member of staff relates to the Chair or Vice-Chair of a committee OR sub-committee, this shall be communicated to another member of the committee OR sub-committee, and shall be reported back to and progressed by resolution of the full Council.
- 26.6** Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of Council employees shall keep written records of all meetings relating to their performance, and capabilities, grievance and disciplinary matters.
- 26.7** The Council shall keep secure all written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and key, and electronic records shall be password protected.
- 26.8** Records documenting reasons for an employee's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for the same.
- 26.9** Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to employee records referred to in standing orders 26.7 and 26.8 above if so justified.
- 26.10** Access and means of access by keys and/or computer passwords to records of employment referred to in standing orders 26.7 and 26.8 above shall be provided only to the Chair of the Council.
- 26.11** The Council's complaints procedure is at Annex D.

27 Freedom of Information Act 2000

- 27.1** 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.
- 27.2** Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Proper Officer to the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The said committee 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 3.2.24 above.

28 Relations with the press, media and social network sites

- 28.1** All requests from the press, media or via social network sites 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, media or social network sites.
- 28.2** In accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press, media and social network sites, Councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media.
- 28.3** Annex G covers relations with the press, media and social network sites in detail.

29 Liaison with Borough and County Councillors

- 29.1** An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the Councillor of the Borough and County Council representing its electoral wards.
- 29.2** Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter sent to the Borough or County Council shall be sent to the Borough and County Councillors representing its electoral wards.

30 Financial matters

- 30.1** The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
- 30.1.1** The accounting records and systems of internal control
 - 30.1.2** The assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council
 - 30.1.3** The work of the Internal Auditor and the receipt of regular reports from the Internal Auditor, which shall be required at least annually
 - 30.1.4** The inspection and copying by Councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments
 - 30.1.5** Procurement policies (subject to standing order 30.2 below) including the setting of values for different procedures where the contract has an estimated value of less than £60,000
- 30.2** Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value in excess of £60,000 shall be procured on the basis of a formal tender as summarised in standing order 30.3 below.
- 30.3** Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:
- 30.3.1** A public notice of intention to place a contract to be placed in the local newspaper
 - 30.3.2** A specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up
 - 30.3.3** Tenders are to be sent, in a sealed, marked envelope, to the Proper Officer by a stated date and time
 - 30.3.4** Tenders submitted are to be opened, after the stated closing date and time, by the Proper Officer and at least one member of the Council
 - 30.3.5** Tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of Council or committee
- 30.4** Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.
- 30.5** Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed Euro 207,000 (or other threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time) the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (SI No. 102, 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.

31 Allegations of breaches of the Code of Conduct

- 31.1** On receipt of a notification that there has been an alleged breach of the code of conduct the Proper Officer shall refer it to the Chair of the Council.
- 31.2** Where the notification relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chair of the Council of that fact, who, upon receipt of such notification, shall nominate a person to assume the duties of the Proper Officer set out in the remainder of this standing order, who shall continue to act in respect of that matter as such until the complaint is resolved.
- 31.3** Where a notification relates to a complaint made by an employee (not being the Proper Officer) the Proper Officer shall ensure that the employee in question does not deal with any aspect of the complaint.
- 31.4** The subject matter of notifications shall be confidential and, insofar as it is possible to do so by law, the Council (including the Proper Officer and the Chair of the Council) shall take the steps set out below, together with other steps considered necessary, to maintain confidentiality.
- 31.4.1** Draft the summonses and agendas in such a way that the identity of those involved, and subject matter of the complaint, are not disclosed
- 31.4.2** Ensure that any background papers containing the information set out in standing order 31.1 above are not made public
- 31.4.3** Ensure that the public and press are excluded from meetings as appropriate
- 31.4.4** Ensure that the minutes of meetings preserve confidentiality
- 31.4.5** Consider any liaison that may be required with the person or body with statutory responsibility for the investigation of the matter
- 31.5** Standing order 31.4 above should not be taken to prohibit the Council (whether through the Proper Officer or the Chair) disclosing information to members and officers of the Council or to other persons where such disclosure is necessary to deal with the complaint or is required by law.
- 31.6** Any investigatory committee set up by the Chair shall have the power to:
- 31.6.1** Seek documentary and other evidence from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter
- 31.6.2** Seek and share information relevant to the complaint
- 31.6.3** Grant the member involved a financial indemnity in respect of legal costs, which shall be in accordance with the law and subject to approval by a meeting of the full Council.
- 31.7** References in standing order 31 to a notification shall be taken to refer to a communication of any kind which relates to a breach or an alleged breach of the code of conduct by a Councillor.

32 Variation, revocation and suspension of Standing Orders

- 32.1** 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.
- 32.2** 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 at a meeting of the Council vote in favour of the same.

33 Standing Orders to be given to Councillors

- 33.1** The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a Councillor upon delivery of their Declaration of Acceptance of Office.
- 33.2** The Chair's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.
- 33.3** A Councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than three times in one meeting may result in that Councillor being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.

34 Councillor resignation

- 34.1** Resignation of a Councillor is effective as soon as the letter of resignation is handed to the Chair.
- 34.2** The Clerk is to inform other Councillors as soon as practical and normally before the Returning Officer is informed of the casual vacancy now existing.

Annexes

- A. Code of Conduct for Councillors, Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations
- B. Terms of Reference for Planning Committee
- C. Terms of Reference for Finance and General Purposes Committee
- D. Complaints procedure
- E. Terms of Reference for Carnival Working Group
- F. Terms of Reference for Travel Token Working Group
- G. Dealing with the press, media and social network sites
- H. Terms of Reference for Social Media Working Group

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCILLORS
DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

1 Application

This Code of Conduct applies to councillors whenever they are acting in their capacity as members or are giving the impression of acting in their capacity as members of Bishopstoke Parish Council including:

- 1.1** At formal meetings of the Council, its committees and sub-committees.
- 1.2** When acting as a representative of the Council.
- 1.3** In taking any decision as Councillor.
- 1.4** In discharging your functions as a Councillor.
- 1.5** At site visits.

2 General Conduct

Councillors must:

- 2.1** Provide leadership to the Council and communities within the Council's boundaries by personal example.
- 2.2** Respect others and not bully any persons.
- 2.3** Recognise that staff are employed by, and serve, the whole Council.
- 2.4** Respect the confidentiality of information which they receive as a member –
 - 2.4.1** Not disclosing confidential information to third parties unless required by law to do so or where there is a clear and over-riding public interest in doing so, and
 - 2.4.2** Not obstructing third parties' legal rights if access to information
- 2.5** Not conduct themselves in a manner which is likely to bring the Council into disrepute.
- 2.6** Use their position as a member in the public interest and not for personal advantage.
- 2.7** Accord with the Council's reasonable rules on the use of public resources for private and political purposes.
- 2.8** Exercise their own independent judgement, taking decisions for good and substantial reasons –
 - 2.8.1** Attaching appropriate weight to all relevant considerations including, where appropriate, public opinion

2.8.2 Paying due regard to the advice of staff and, in particular, to the advice of the statutory officers, namely the Clerk, stating the reasons for their decisions where those reasons are not otherwise apparent

2.9 Account for their actions.

2.10 Ensure that the Council acts within the law.

3 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

In accordance with S31(4) of the Localism Act 2011, Councillors must:

3.1 Comply with the statutory requirements to register their disclosable pecuniary interests and they must disclose, leave the room and not participate in respect of any matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest unless a dispensation has been granted.

3.2 Ensure that their register of interests is kept up to date and notify the Monitoring Officer in writing within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes in respect of their disclosable pecuniary interests.

3.3 Make a verbal declaration of the existence of any disclosable pecuniary interest at any meeting at which they are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

3.4 “Meeting” means any meeting organised by, or on behalf of, the Council, including –

3.4.1 Any meeting of the Council, or a committee or sub-committee of Council

3.4.2 In taking a decision as a member of any body of the Council, and

3.4.3 At any site visit to do with business of the Council

4 Others Interests

4.1 In addition to the requirements of Section 3 of this Code of Conduct, if a Councillor attends a meeting which any item of business is to be considered and that Councillor is aware that they have a non-disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest in that item, they must make a verbal declaration of the existence of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

4.2 Councillors have a non-disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest where:

4.2.1 A decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing of the Councillor or of a member of their family or a person with whom that Councillor has a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the Parish, or

4.2.2 It relates to or is likely to affect any interests listed in the Table in the Appendix to this Code, but in respect of a family member (other than a “relevant person”) or a person with whom that Councillor has a close association and that interest is not a disclosable pecuniary interest

5 Gifts and Hospitality

- 5.1** Councillors must, within 28 days of receipt, notify the Monitoring Officer in writing of any gift , benefit or hospitality with a value in excess of £50 which has been accepted as a Councillor from any person or body other than the Council.
- 5.2** The Monitoring Officer will place this notification on a public register of gifts and hospitality.
- 5.3** This duty to notify the Monitoring Officer does not apply where the gift, benefit or hospitality comes within any description approved by the Council for this purpose.

6 Dispensations

- 6.1** S33 of the Localism Act 2011 allows a dispensation to be granted on written request to the Proper Officer allowing a Councillor to participate in discussion and/or take part in a vote on any matter where they have a disclosable pecuniary interest.
- 6.2** Dispensations may only be granted where so many Councillors have a disclosable pecuniary interest that, without the dispensation, the transaction of that business would be impeded OR the dispensation is considered to be in the interests of persons living in the area OR it is considered appropriate to grant a dispensation.
- 6.3** Dispensations granted must be for a specific period which may not exceed 4 years.
- 6.4** Any Councillor granted a dispensation shall declare the nature and existence of the dispensation before the start of any business to which it relates and this disclosure shall be minuted.
- 6.5** Where a dispensation is granted, the Councillor may remain in the room and participate in the discussion and vote on the matter in hand even where they would otherwise be prohibited because they have a dispensation.
- 6.6** General dispensations may be applied for to cover any allowance, payment or indemnity given to Councillors setting the Precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 or other instance thought appropriate.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

The duties to register, disclose and not to participate in respect of any matter in which a Councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest are set out in Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

Disclosable pecuniary interests are defined in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012 as follows:

Interest	Prescribed description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the relevant authority) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards the election expenses of you This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992
Contracts	Any contract which is made between the relevant person (or a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest) and the Council: (a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed, and (b) which has not been fully discharged
Land	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the Council
Licences	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the Council for a month or longer
Corporate tenancies	Any tenancy where (to your knowledge): (a) The landlord is the Council, and (b) The tenant is a body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where: (a) That body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the Council, and (b) either (i) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body, or (ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class

For this purpose:

“the Act” means the Localism Act 2011;

“body in which the relevant person has a beneficial interest” means a firm in which the relevant person is a partner or a body corporate of which the relevant person is a director, or in the securities of which the relevant person has a beneficial interest;

“director” includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society;

“land” excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not carry with it a right for the relevant person (alone or jointly with another) to occupy the land or to receive income;

“member” includes a co-opted member;

“relevant period” means the period of 12 months ending with the day on which you give a notification for the purposes of section 30(1) or section 31(7), as the case may be, of the Act;

“relevant person” means you or any other person referred to in section 30(3)(b) of the Act;

“securities” means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

**STANDING ORDERS FOR THE
PLANNING COMMITTEE**

1 Meetings

- 1.1** Meetings of the Committee shall be held twice monthly on the second and fourth Tuesdays at 7:00pm in the evening unless otherwise decided at a previous meeting or if no applications are tabled for consideration.

2 Quorum

- 2.1** The Committee membership shall comprise up to seven members, three of whom shall constitute a quorum.

3 Planning Applications

- 3.1** The Clerk shall maintain a record of each planning application received showing the date of receipt, the reference number, the place to which the application relates and a summary of the nature of the application.
- 3.2** The Clerk shall produce and circulate to each Committee Member a copy of the Agenda for each meeting, together with the Minutes of the previous meeting at least three clear working days in advance.
- 3.3** The Clerk shall ensure that any objections relating to those applications to be discussed at the meeting are made known to the Committee members before a decision is taken.
- 3.4** The Clerk shall ensure that all Planning Applications on the Agenda and to be considered at that meeting are available for inspection by members at the meeting venue fifteen minutes before the scheduled start of the meeting.
- 3.5** The Clerk shall take Minutes of the meeting and any follow-up actions as directed.
- 3.6** The Clerk shall notify the decision reached to Eastleigh Borough Council Planning Directorate within the deadline specified unless reasonable circumstances prevent this.
- 3.7** Any comments and/or objections the Committee wishes to make regarding planning briefs / structure plans, whether in draft or final form, or any other reports other than planning applications, are to be ratified by the Parish Council.
- 3.8** The Chair, or, in their absence, the Vice-Chair, shall present a report at each Parish Council meeting on decisions made by the Planning Committee and decisions made by Eastleigh Borough Council on applications considered within the Parish boundary since the previous Parish Council meeting. Alternatively, this may be effected by the circulation of the relevant minutes with other agenda papers before the meeting.

**STANDING ORDERS FOR THE
FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

1 Meetings

- 1.1** Meetings of the Committee shall be held once monthly on the second Tuesday at 7:30pm in the evening unless otherwise decided at a previous meeting.

2 Quorum

- 2.1** The Committee membership shall comprise up to seven members, three of whom shall constitute a quorum.

3 Consideration of Business

- 3.1** Business shall be conducted in the order stated on the Agenda unless otherwise directed by the Chair.

- 3.2** The Committee shall have the autonomy to pass resolutions and report upon such resolutions to the next full meeting of the Parish Council on:

- 3.2.1** Relevant matters that do not directly commit to expenditure
- 3.2.2** Expenditure for sums under £5,000 that are within agreed annual budgets and to have discretion to exceed such budgets by up to £500
- 3.2.3** Payments made to staff including mileage and reimbursement of out of pocket expenses

- 3.3** The Committee shall make recommendations only on:

- 3.3.1** Expenditure exceeding £5,000 or exceeding annual budgets by more than £500
- 3.3.2** Virement of sums from reserve where a budget is to be exceeded by more than £500 or a new budget head to be created
- 3.3.3** All Grant Aid applications
- 3.3.4** All consultations addressed to the Parish Council

- 3.4** The Clerk shall take minutes of the meeting and take any follow-up action as directed.

- 3.5** The Chair, or, in their absence, the Vice-Chair, shall present a report at each meeting of the Parish Council on resolutions passed and recommendations made by the Committee since the last meeting.

4 Financial Regulations

- 4.1** Detailed financial regulations governing the management and control of funds are appended to this Annex.

Bishopstoke Financial Regulations

1 General

- 1.1** These financial regulations govern the conduct of financial management by the Council and may only be amended or varied by resolution of the Council.
- 1.2** The Council is responsible in law for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that there is a sound system of financial control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions, including arrangements for the management of risk and for the prevention and detection of fraud and corruption. These financial regulations are designed to demonstrate how the Council meets these responsibilities.
- 1.3** The Council's accounting control systems must include measures – for the timely production of accounts that provide for the safe and efficient safeguarding of public money to prevent and detect inaccuracies and fraud and identifying the duties of employees.
- 1.4** At least once a year, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement, the Council must review the effectiveness of its system of internal control which shall be in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.5** A breach of these regulations by an employee is gross misconduct and failure to follow instructions within these regulations brings the office of the Councillor into disrepute.
- 1.6** The Responsible Finance Officer (RFO) is a statutory officer and is appointed by the Council. The RFO, acting under the policy direction of the Council and Proper Officer, if the latter is a separate appointee, within the terms of the RFO's job description, shall administer the Council's financial affairs in accordance with proper practices. The RFO shall determine on behalf of the Council its accounting records, and accounting control systems. The RFO shall ensure that the accounting control systems are observed and that the accounting records of the Council are maintained and kept up to date in accordance with proper practices.
- 1.7** The RFO shall produce financial management information as required by the Council.
- 1.8** All financial information prepared shall comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations (England) 2015.
- 1.9** Within these regulations, the Council is not empowered to delegate specific decisions. In particular, any decision regarding setting the budget, approving accounting statements, approving the annual governance statement, borrowing, writing off bad debts, declaring eligibility for the general power of competence or addressing recommendations in any report from the internal or external auditor.
- 1.10** The Council must keep the bank mandate under regular review.

2 Accounting and Audit (Internal and External)

- 2.1** All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.
- 2.2** At least quarterly and at the end of each financial year, the Chair shall verify the bank reconciliation statements and sign the reconciliations and bank statements as evidence of verification.
- 2.3** The RFO shall complete the annual statements of account, annual report and any related documents as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year.
- 2.4** The Council shall ensure there is an effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of the system of internal control in accordance with proper practices. Councillors and employees shall make available such documents and records which appear to the Council to be necessary for the purpose of the audit and shall provide such explanations as might be necessary.
- 2.5** The internal auditor shall be competent and independent of the financial operations of the Council. They shall report in writing and be free of any perceived conflicts of interest and have no involvement in the financial decision making, management or control of the Council.
- 2.6** Internal and external auditors may not perform any operational duties for the Council, or initiate or approve accounting transactions or direct the activities of any employee, except to the extent such employees have been assigned to assist the internal auditor.

3 Annual Estimates (Budget) and Forward Planning

- 3.1** Detailed estimates of all payments and receipts including the use of reserves and all sources of funding for the year shall be prepared each year by the RFO in the form of a budget to be considered by the Council.
- 3.2** The Council shall review the budget not later than the end of December each year and in January shall fix the Precept to be levied for the ensuing financial year. The RFO shall issue the Precept to the billing authority and shall supply each member with a copy of the approved budget.
- 3.3** The annual budgets shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.
- 3.4** The Council shall consider the need for appropriate longer-term financial forecasts and objectives, having regard to planned projects and expenditure.
- 3.5** The Finance and General Purposes Committee shall produce a three year forecast of revenue and capital receipts and payments which shall form the basis upon which budget proposals for the following year shall be made.
- 3.6** The approved annual budget shall form the basis of financial control for the ensuing year.

4 Budgetary Control

- 4.1** No expenditure may be incurred that will exceed the amount provided in the revenue budget plus £500 for that class of expenditure except that during the budget year, and with the approval of Council having considered fully the implications for public services, unspent budget headings and available sums from reserves may be vired to other budget headings or to an earmarked reserve, as appropriate.
- 4.2** The RFO shall regularly provide the Council with a statement of payments and receipts to date under each budget head, comparing actual expenditure to the appropriate date against that planned as shown in the budget. These statements will normally be prepared monthly, but must be prepared at least at the end of each financial quarter.
- 4.3** The Clerk may incur expenditure on behalf of the Council that is necessary to carry out any repair, replacement or other work that is of such extreme urgency that it must be done at once, whether or not there is any budgetary provision for the expenditure, subject to a limit of £2,500. The Clerk shall report the action to the Council as soon as practicable thereafter.
- 4.4** Unspent provisions in the revenue budget shall not be carried forward to a subsequent year unless placed in an earmarked reserve by resolution of the Council.
- 4.5** No expenditure shall be incurred in relation to any capital project and no contract entered into or tender accepted involving capital expenditure unless the Council is satisfied that the necessary funds are available, or the requisite borrowing approval has been obtained.
- 4.6** All capital works shall be administered in accordance with the Council's standing orders and financial regulations relating to contracts.

5 Banking arrangements

- 5.1** The Council's banking arrangements, including the Bank Mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the Council. They shall be regularly reviewed for efficiency.
- 5.2** A schedule of the payments required to be authorised, forming part of the agenda for the meeting, shall be prepared by the RFO and be presented to every meeting of the Council. If the schedule is in order it shall be authorised by a resolution of the Council and shall be initialled by the Chair of the meeting. A copy of the schedule will be attached to and form a part of the Minutes of the meeting.
- 5.3** Cheques drawn on the bank account in accordance with the schedule referred to in paragraph 5.2 of this Appendix (above) shall be signed by two authorised signatories, one of whom is to be a Councillor.
- 5.4** To indicate agreement of the details shown on the cheque with the counterfoil and any supporting documentation, the signatories shall each also initial the cheque counterfoil.
- 5.5** The RFO may effect transfers of funds between accounts up to a maximum of £20,000. Transfers above this amount require joint authorisation by the RFO and a Councillor.

6 Payment of accounts

- 6.1** All payments shall be effected by BACS, CHAPS, internet banking transfer, debit cards, cheque, direct debit or other order drawn on the Council's bankers.
- 6.2** The Council will employ safe and efficient arrangements for making payments.
- 6.3** Following authorisation under section 5 of this Appendix (above), the Council, or Finance and General Purposes Committee or, if so delegated, the Clerk or RFO, shall give instruction that a payment shall be made.
- 6.4** All payments shall be effected in accordance with a resolution of Council or the Financial and General Purposes Committee.
- 6.5** If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for utility supplies (energy, telephone and water), national non-domestic rates and subscription / affiliation fees, may be made by variable Direct Debit provided that the instructions are signed by the Clerk or RFO and authorised by Council. The approval of the use of a variable Direct Debit shall be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years.
- 6.6** If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for certain items may be made by Banker's Standing Order provided the instructions are signed or otherwise evidenced by the Clerk or RFO, are retained and any payments made are reported to Council. The approval of the use of a Banker's Standing Order shall be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years.
- 6.7** If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for certain items may be made by BACS or CHAPS methods provided the instructions for each payment are signed or otherwise evidenced by the Clerk or RFO, are retained and any payments made are reported to the Council. The approval of the use of BACS or CHAPS shall be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years.
- 6.8** If thought appropriate by the Council, payment for certain items may be made by internet banking transfer provided evidence showing the payment is retained and any payments made are reported to Council.
- 6.9** Where a computer requires use of a personal identification number (PIN) or other password(s), for access to the Council's records on that computer, a note shall be made of the PIN and passwords and shall be handed to and retained by the Chair of Council in a sealed, dated envelope. This envelope may not be opened other than in the presence of two other Councillors. After the envelope has been opened in any circumstances, the PIN and / or passwords shall be changed as soon as practicable. The fact that the sealed envelope has been opened, in whatever circumstances, shall be reported to all Councillors immediately, and formally at the next available meeting of the Council.
- 6.10** No employee or Councillor shall disclose any PIN or password, relevant to the working of the Council or its bank accounts, to any person not authorised in writing by the Council or a duly delegated committee.
- 6.11** Regular back-up copies of the records on any computer shall be made and shall be stored securely away from the computer in question.
- 6.12** The Council, and any Councillors using computers for the Council's financial business, shall ensure that anti-virus, anti-spyware and firewall software with automatic updates, together with a high level of security, is used.

- 6.13** Where internet banking arrangements are made with any bank, the Clerk or RFO shall be appointed as the Service Administrator.
- 6.14** Access to any internet banking accounts will be directly to the access page (which may be saved under “favourites”) and not through a search engine or e-mail link.
- 6.15** Changes to account details for suppliers, which are used for internet banking may only be changed on written hard copy notification by the supplier. A programme of regular checks of standing data with suppliers should be followed.
- 6.16** All invoices for payment shall be examined, verified and certified by the Clerk. The Clerk shall satisfy themselves that the work, goods or services to which the invoice relates, shall have been received, carried out, examined and approved.
- 6.17** The RFO shall examine invoices for arithmetical accuracy and shall allocate them to the appropriate expenditure heading. The RFO shall take appropriate steps to settle all invoices submitted, and which are in order, at the next available Council meeting.
- 6.18** If payment is necessary before the next scheduled meeting of Council, the Clerk may, notwithstanding paragraph 6.17 of this appendix (above), take appropriate steps to settle such invoices provided that such payments are included in the schedule referred to in paragraph 5.2 of this appendix (above).
- 6.19** The Council will not maintain any form of cash float. All cash received shall be banked intact. Any payments made in cash by staff shall be refunded on a regular basis.
- 6.20** Debit cards will be issued to the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk solely for use in making payments required for Bishopstoke Parish Council. Use of the debit card shall be restricted to a single transaction maximum value of £500, unless authorised by Council or Finance and General Purposes Committee in writing before any order is placed. Purchases placed by debit card will be reported to the next Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting.

7 Payment of salaries

- 7.1** As an employer, the Council shall make arrangements to meet fully the statutory requirements placed on all employers by PAYE and National Insurance legislation. The payment of all salaries shall be made in accordance with payroll records and the rules of PAYE and National Insurance currently operating, and salaries shall be as agreed by Council.
- 7.2** Payment of salaries and payment of deductions from salaries such as may be made for tax, national insurance and pension contributions, may be made in accordance with the payroll records and on appropriate dates stipulated in employment contracts, provided that such payments are approved by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and reported to the next available Council meeting.
- 7.3** No changes to employees' pay, emoluments, or terms and conditions of employment shall be made without the prior consent of the Council.
- 7.4** Payments to employees are confidential and such records are not open to review under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, or otherwise, other than by a Councillor who demonstrates a need to know, or the internal or external auditor.

8 Loans and investments

- 8.1** All loans and investments shall be negotiated in the name of the Council and shall be for a set period in accordance with Council policy.
- 8.2** The Council shall consider the need for an Investment Policy which, if drawn up, shall be in accordance with relevant regulations, proper practices and guidance. Any policy shall be reviewed at least annually.
- 8.3** All investments of money under the control of the Council shall be in the name of the Council.
- 8.4** All borrowings shall be effected in the name of the Council, after obtaining any necessary borrowing approval. Any application for borrowing approval shall be approved by the Council as to terms and purpose. The terms and conditions of borrowings shall be reviewed at least annually.
- 8.5** All investment certificates and other documents relating thereto shall be retained in the custody of the RFO.

9 Income

- 9.1** The collection of all sums due to the Council shall be the responsibility of and under the supervision of the RFO.
- 9.2** Particulars of all charges to be made for work done, services rendered or goods supplied shall be agreed annually by the Council, notified to the RFO and the RFO shall be responsible for the collection of all accounts due to the Council.
- 9.3** The Council will review all fees and charges annually, following a report by the RFO.
- 9.4** Any sums found to be irrecoverable and any bad debts shall be reported to the Council and shall be written off in the year.
- 9.5** All sums received on behalf of the Council shall be banked intact as directed by the RFO. All receipts shall be deposited with the Council's bankers with such frequency as the RFO considers necessary.
- 9.6** The origin of each receipt shall be entered on the paying-in slip.
- 9.7** Personal cheques shall not be cashed out of money held on behalf of the Council.
- 9.8** The RFO shall complete promptly any VAT Returns required. Any repayment claim due in accordance with VAT Act 1994 Section 33 shall be made quarterly and to coincide with the financial year-end.
- 9.9** Where any significant sums of cash are received by the Council, the RFO shall take such steps as are agreed by the Council to ensure that more than one person is present when the cash is counted in the first instance, that there is a reconciliation to some form of control such as ticket issues, and that appropriate care is taken in the security and safety of individuals banking such cash.

10 Orders for works, goods and services

- 10.1** An official order by letter or e-mail shall be issued for all work, goods and services unless a formal contract is to be prepared.
- 10.2** Order books, if in use, shall be controlled by the RFO.
- 10.3** All Councillors and employees are responsible for obtaining value for money at all times. An employee issuing an official order shall ensure as far as reasonable and practicable that the best available terms are obtained in respect of each transaction, for example by obtaining three or more quotations or estimates from appropriate suppliers, subject to any *de minimis* provisions in Section 11 of this appendix (below).
- 10.4** The RFO shall verify the lawful nature of any proposed purchase before the issue of any order, and in the case of new or infrequent purchases or payments, the RFO shall ensure that the statutory authority for such payments shall be reported to the meeting at which the order is approved so that the minutes can record the power being used.
- 10.5** A Councillor may not issue any official order or enter into any contract on behalf of the Council.

11 Contracts

11.1 Procedures as to contracts are laid down as follows:

- 11.1.1** Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than by resolution of the Council or in an emergency, provided that these regulations shall not apply to contracts which relate to items 11.1.1.1 to 11.1.1.6 below.
- 11.1.1.1** For the supply of utility services.
- 11.1.1.2** For specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants.
- 11.1.1.3** For work to be executed or goods or materials to be supplied which consist of repairs to or parts for existing machinery or equipment.
- 11.1.1.4** For work to be executed or goods or materials supplied which constitute an extension of an existing contract by the Council.
- 11.1.1.5** For additional audit work of the External Auditor up to an estimated value of £500 (in excess of this sum the Clerk and RFO shall act after consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council).
- 11.1.1.6** For goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary articles and / or are only sold at a fixed price.
- 11.1.2** Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £60,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are expected as set out in paragraph 11.1.1 of this appendix (above) the Clerk shall invite tenders from at least three contractors.
- 11.1.3** When applications are made to waive financial regulations relating to contracts to enable a price to be negotiated without competition the reason shall be embodied in a recommendation approved by the Council.
- 11.1.4** Such invitation to tender shall state the general nature of the intended contact and the Clerk shall obtain the necessary technical assistance to prepare a specification in appropriate cases. The invitation shall in addition state the tenders must be addressed to the Clerk in the ordinary course of post. Each tendering contractor shall be supplied with a specifically marked envelope in which the tender is to be sealed until the prescribed date for opening tenders for that contract.
- 11.1.5** All sealed tenders shall be opened at the same time on the prescribed date by the Clerk in the presence of at least one member of Council.
- 11.1.6** If less than three tenders are received for contracts above £60,000 or if all the tenders are identical the Council may make such arrangements as it thinks fit for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works.
- 11.1.7** Any invitation to tender issued under this regulation shall contain a statement to the effect that any canvassing by or of a Councillor shall disqualify that contractor from the tendering process. (Bribery Act 2010)

- 11.1.8** When the Council is to enter into a contract less than £60,000 but greater than £10,000 in value for the supply of goods or materials or for the execution of works or specialist services other than such goods, materials, works or specialist services as are excepted as set out in paragraph 11.1.1 of this appendix (above), the Clerk shall obtain 3 quotations (priced descriptions of the proposed supply), if appropriate, otherwise, Regulation 10.3 in this appendix shall apply.
- 11.1.9** The Council shall not be obliged to accept the lowest, or any, tender, quote or estimate.

12 Insurance

- 12.1** Following the annual risk assessment (as per Financial Regulation 1.4 above), the Clerk shall effect all insurances and negotiate all claims on the Council's insurers.
- 12.2** The Clerk shall keep a record of all insurances effected by the Council and the property and risks covered thereby and annually review it.
- 12.3** The Clerk shall be notified of any loss, liability or damage or of any event likely to lead to a claim, and shall report these to Council at the next available meeting.
- 12.4** All appropriate employees of the Council shall be included in a suitable fidelity guarantee insurance, which shall cover the maximum risk exposure as determined by the Council.

13 Assets, Properties and Estates

- 13.1** The Clerk shall make appropriate arrangements for the custody of all title deeds and Land Registry Certificates of properties held by the Council. The Clerk shall ensure a record is maintained of all properties held by the Council, recording the location, extent, plan, reference, purchase, details, nature of the interest, tenancies granted, rents payable and purpose for which held in accordance with Accounts and Audit Regulations.
- 13.2** No tangible movable property shall be purchased or otherwise acquired, sold, leased or otherwise disposed of, without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law, save where the estimated value of any one item of tangible movable property does not exceed £500.
- 13.3** No real property (interests in land) shall be sold, leased or otherwise disposed of without the authority of the Council, together with any other consents required by law. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 13.4** No real property (interests in land) shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council in respect of valuation and surveyed condition of the property (including matters such as planning permissions and covenants) together with a proper business case (including an adequate level of consultation with the electorate).
- 13.5** Subject only to the limit set in paragraph 13.2 in this appendix (above), no tangible movable property shall be purchased or acquired without the authority of the full Council. In each case a report in writing shall be provided to Council with a full business case, as appropriate.

14 Risk Management

- 14.1** The Council is responsible for putting in place arrangements for the management of risk. The Clerk shall prepare, for approval by the Council, risk management policy statements in respect of all activities of the Council. Risk policy statements and consequential risk management arrangements shall be reviewed by the Council at least annually.
- 14.2** When considering any new activity, the Clerk shall prepare a draft risk assessment including risk management proposals for consideration and adoption by the Council.

15 Revision of Financial Regulations

- 15.1** It shall be the duty of the Council to review the Financial Regulations of the Council from time to time. The Clerk shall make arrangements to monitor changes in legislation or proper practices and shall advise the Council of any requirement for a consequential amendment to these financial regulations.

16 Suspension of regulations

- 16.1** The Council may, by resolution of the Council, duly notified prior to the relevant meeting of Council, suspend any part of these Financial Regulations provided that reasons for the suspension are recorded and that an assessment of the risk arising has been drawn up and presented in advance to Councillors.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1 General

- 1.1** Complaints against employees should be dealt with under employment legislation. Complainants should be assured that the matter will be dealt with internally as such and appropriate action taken as required.
- 1.2** Persons wishing to complain about a Bishopstoke Councillor should be advised to contact the Eastleigh Borough Council Monitoring Officer for further information.
- 1.3** Complainants should be assured that their grievances will be properly and fully considered. It may be appropriate for a committee to be established to consider the action to be taken in which case the conclusions reached shall be reported to the next full Council meeting.
- 1.4** The procedure outlined in this Annex is designed for those complaints which cannot be satisfied by less formal measures or explanations provided to the complainant by the Clerk or other Proper Officer or by the Chair.
- 1.5** At all time, the rule of natural justice will apply requiring all parties to be treated fairly and the process to be reasonable, accessible and transparent.

2 Before the meeting

- 2.1** The complainant shall be asked to put the complaint about the Council's procedures or administration in writing to the Clerk or other nominated Proper Officer.
- 2.2** If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the Clerk or other Proper Officer, they shall be advised to put it to the Chair.
- 2.3** The Clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Council or the committee established for the purpose of hearing complaints.
- 2.4** The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring such representatives as they wish.
- 2.5** Seven clear working days before the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The Council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which it wishes to rely at the meeting.

3 At the meeting

- 3.1** The Council shall consider whether the circumstances at the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and the press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
- 3.2** The Chair shall introduce everyone.
- 3.3** The Chair shall explain the procedure.
- 3.4** The complainant or representative shall outline the grounds for the complaint.
- 3.5** The committee members may ask any question of the complainant or representative.
- 3.6** If relevant, the Clerk or other Proper Officer shall explain the Council's position.
- 3.7** The committee members may ask any questions of the Clerk or other Proper Officer.
- 3.8** The Clerk or other Proper Officer and the complainant and representative if present shall be offered the opportunity of making a final statement (in this order).
- 3.9** The Clerk or other Proper Officer and the complainant and representative if present shall be asked to leave the room while committee members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been established. Both parties shall be invited back if a point of clarification is necessary.
- 3.10** The Clerk or other Proper Officer and the complainant and representative if present shall return to hear the decision or to be advised when a decision will be made.

4 After the meeting

- 4.1** The decision shall be confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.

BISHOPSTOKE CARNIVAL

WORKING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1** The Bishopstoke Carnival Working Group shall report to the Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GP) in the exercise of its responsibilities for organising and administering the Bishopstoke Carnival.
- 2** The report, which may be verbal or in writing, shall be tabled under a permanent item on the F&GP Committee's Agenda.
- 3** The Working Group shall appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair at its first meeting and annually thereafter at a meeting before the end of the Calendar year or in January at the start of the following year.
- 4** The Chair of the Carnival Working Group shall be authorised to sign those documents calling for the signature of a responsible person, or in their absence the person so authorised shall be the Vice-Chair. In the absence of the Chair or the Vice-Chair the person authorised is to be a nominated member of the Carnival Working Group. The signature shall be on behalf of Bishopstoke Parish Council and documents so signed shall be identified in the Chair's report to the F&GP Committee.
- 5** The Clerk or other person appointed by the Working Group shall maintain minutes of all meetings and minutes of the previous meeting shall be adopted at the next meeting. Draft minutes shall be circulated to all Councillors and Working Group members as soon as possible after the meeting to which they relate.
- 6** The Working Group shall have no powers to commit to any expenditure and shall not hold any cash or open a bank account. However, when cash is handled as part of the Carnival proceedings, it is to be banked as soon as possible and, where appropriate, supported by a receipt detailing from whom it was received and the value. Exceptionally, where small value items are purchased by a member of the Working Group, reimbursement shall be made by the Clerk against a purchase receipt and the transaction accounted for in the financial reports to the F&GP Committee. All other financial transactions shall be handled by the Clerk following appropriate authorisation by the F&GP Committee to whom the full Council shall have delegated this power by resolution.
- 7** The Parish Council recognises that costs might exceed income in mounting the Carnival and is prepared to underwrite these costs and budget accordingly as part of the annual budget process. However, every effort is to be made by the Working Group to minimise outgoings and, in particular, require an estimated income and expenditure from those Working Group members or others who organise a standalone activity authorised by the Working Group. External sponsorship is to be encouraged to minimise reliance on Parish Council funds.
- 8** The Chair of the Working Group shall present the accounts of each year's Carnival to the F&GP Committee before the end of October together with recommendations on grants to be made from any surplus. All proceeds from the street collection to be distributed as grants, and according to the terms of the street collection licence. The F&GP Committee shall be authorised by full Council to confirm these distributions
- 9** The Working Group shall comprise both Councillors and co-opted volunteers who shall have equal rights and powers whilst members of the Carnival Working Group. Other volunteers, not formally

members of the Group, may be given specific responsibilities by the Group and these should be minuted accordingly.

- 10** The Working Group shall maintain a list of current members with contact details and this list should be noted by the F&GP Committee.
- 11** The Clerk shall maintain a list of the assets used for Carnival equipment and the location of each. This list is to be verified annually at a meeting of the Working Group and any changes notified to the Clerk for record and insurance purposes.
- 12** The Working Group is responsible for both identifying and assisting to ensure that all necessary legislation is complied with and appropriate license obtained for the Carnival event, seeking help and / or clarification from the F&GP Committee or others, where necessary.

**TRAVEL TOKEN
WORKING GROUP
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- 1** The Travel Token Working Group shall report to the Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GP) in the exercise of its responsibilities for travel token provision.
- 2** The Travel Token Working Group is to be a minimum of four Councillors and the Clerk. Councillor membership is to be a minimum of two male and two female Councillors.
- 3** The Travel Token Working Group will meet annually in October to decide the total value to be given to each successful applicant, to consider / review the number of applications received (in the last year), and to make recommendations on any changes to the scheme at the November F&GP Committee meeting.
- 4** Members of the Travel Token Working Group are responsible for carrying out home visits to assess the eligibility of applicants. Visits should be carried out by two Working Group members, at least one of whom must be the same gender as the applicant. If the applicant is being put forward as eligible by a member of the Working Group, the subsequent home visit must be carried out by two different members of the Group. In the case of an applicant who has been deemed ineligible making an appeal, this will be considered by a panel of Councillors not involved in the Travel Token Scheme.
- 5** Applications shall be determined by the Councillors appointed to meet with the applicant and a decision on eligibility confirmed to other members when practical.
- 6** The Clerk or other person appointed by the Working Group shall maintain minutes on meetings held and any decisions reached.
- 7** The Travel Token Working Group shall appoint a lead Councillor for the Group who shall report matters determined or of interest to the F&GP Committee at its next meeting.
- 8** The Working Group shall no powers to commit any expenditure.

**DEALING WITH THE PRESS, MEDIA
AND SOCIAL NETWORK SITES**

1 Introduction

- 1.1** The Council adopts as open a policy as possible in dealing with enquiries from the media and members of the public in recognition of the democratic structure of the Council, the delivery of public services and its commitment to Freedom of Information.

2 General

- 2.1** It should be noted that what is published will be in the public domain:
- 2.1.1** Indefinitely and that you may be held personally responsible for the content that you publish.
 - 2.1.2** Compliance with data protection, intellectual property and copyright laws should be ensured.
 - 2.1.3** Confidential matters from Council meetings must not be published or reported on in social media.
 - 2.1.4** Details about customers, partners or suppliers should not be referred to without their prior written approval (ensuring no advertisement of the services and goods of third parties).
 - 2.1.5** Staff and Councillors must refrain from promoting themselves as working for the Council in a way which has, or may have, the effect of bringing the Council into disrepute.
 - 2.1.6** Staff and Councillors must not disclose personal data or information about the Council, or its service users, employees or Councillors that breach the Data Protection Act 1998 (e.g. photographs, images).
 - 2.1.7** Staff and Councillors must not give out personal details of third parties, such as home address and telephone numbers, unless specifically required for the purposes of the comment or posting, for example to give contact details that need to be publicised for which permission has been given, or for which details are already available in the public domain.
 - 2.1.8** Staff and Councillors must not make any defamatory remarks about the Council, its service users, employees or Councillors, or conduct themselves in a way that brings the Council into disrepute.
 - 2.1.9** Staff and Councillors must not use insulting, offensive or racist language, or engage in any other conduct that would not be acceptable in the workplace.

3 Points of contact

- 3.1** The Chair and / or the Clerk, have the main responsibility for fielding and responding to media / public enquiries, communicating with staff and issuing instructions for editing of the Council website and dealing with Freedom of Information requests.

4 Media Outlet

- 4.1** In its area, the Council has a number of local newspapers, radio stations, television companies and major news (freelance) agencies feeding the national press. All have staff reporters operating in the area and there is also a growing network of community newspapers and community radio stations.

5 Press Releases

- 5.1** The Council releases articles to the media usually on a monthly basis or more frequently if the need arises. It also displays them on the Council website and includes the article details on the Council's Facebook page. The articles are issued by the Clerk to ensure consistency of quality and presentation and maximum coverage.

6 Handling Media Enquiries

- 6.1** Calls from national newspapers and general media enquiries are to be channelled through the Chair or Clerk for an official Parish Council response.
- 6.2** Any media inquiry relating to a matter of a serious or disciplinary nature is to be referred to the Chair (unless the matter is related to the Chair, in which case they should be advised to contact the Eastleigh Borough Council Monitoring Officer).

7 Media Training

- 7.1** The Chair and Clerk should, if necessary, undergo training to assist them in handling enquiries from the media.

8 Social media – general

- 8.1** Social media can bring great advantages in communication and this policy is intended to encourage its responsible use.
- 8.2** Users of social media must ensure that they use social media sensibly and responsibly, without adversely affecting the Council or damaging its reputation and credibility. They must also ensure that they keep to any Council guidelines regarding the use of social media.
- 8.3** The use by employees of social media whilst at work is currently restricted to the Bishopstoke Parish Council Facebook presence. The use of Twitter by staff is not currently permitted, nor is use of chat rooms. Employees using social media must be aware of, and comply with, the Council’s Social Media policy.
- 8.4** The following guidelines should be followed by employees. These guidelines should also be followed by Councillors when acting in their capacity as a Councillor, or when signing off an email, comment, posting, or any other form of digital entry in social media, as a Councillor. Where necessary, a Councillor should add the caveat that “the views expressed are those of the author and do not reflect the views and opinions of Bishopstoke Parish Council”.
- 8.5** No Parish Council content should be published unless it is already on the Council’s website or with the prior approval of the Clerk. Information should be accurate, fair, thorough and transparent.
- 8.6** Staff and Councillors must not receive, send, or display offensive messages or pictures.
- 8.7** Staff and Councillors must not issue passwords to third parties unless authorised to do so. They must also not use anyone else’s password or identity.

9 Control of the Bishopstoke Parish Council Facebook Presence

- 9.1** Postings may only be made by the Clerk or by the lead Councillor from the Social Media Working Group in the Clerk's absence, who will be responsible for removing any unacceptable comments. Comments by others will be considered unacceptable if they do not follow the guidelines outlined above for staff and Councillors. The Clerk will use their best endeavours to check the Facebook presence each working day, with arrangements being put in place for other members of the Working Group to check the page during the Clerk's holiday periods. The password to the Facebook page will be provided to these persons and must be kept confidential and not divulged to a third party.
- 9.2** Postings by others are not permitted on the Bishopstoke Parish Council Facebook Page unless there is a clear case for doing so. Such cases to be determined by the Clerk. Examples of postings that will not be permitted will include commercial advertising or items for other parties. Items likely to be accepted will include information postings from Community Groups.
- 9.3** Contained within the Bishopstoke Parish Facebook presence will be such pages as are deemed necessary by the Council at various times. The Clerk and designated Councillors will have sole authority to publish material on these pages.
- 9.4** There will be a separate provision of a Facebook page for the Bishopstoke Carnival. This will be connected to, but not part of, the Bishopstoke Parish Facebook presence. Postings will not be limited to pre-published or clerk-approved material, but will instead have a "lighter" feel. It is permissible for the Bishopstoke Carnival Facebook page to be run by a volunteer from the Bishopstoke Carnival Working Group, although a Councillor from the Carnival or Social Media Working Groups will be appointed to liaise with the appointed volunteer and oversee the content of the page. The Clerk will also be required to have access.
- 9.5** There will be a separate password for the Bishopstoke Parish Carnival Facebook page, but this password will be set by the appointed liaison Councillor and must be made known to the Clerk.

10 Terms of reference for the Social Media Working Group are at Annex H

**SOCIAL MEDIA
WORKING GROUP
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- 1** The Social Media Working Group shall report to the Finance and General Purposes Committee (F&GP) in the exercise of its responsibilities for social media.
- 2** The Social Media Working Group shall advise on the social media policy for Bishopstoke Parish Council and the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter.
- 3** The Social Media Working Group shall meet as required and at least once in each year.
- 4** The Working Group shall appoint a lead Councillor for the Group who shall report matters determined or of interest to the F&GP Committee at its next meeting.
- 5** The Clerk or other person appointed by the Working Group shall maintain minutes on meetings held and decisions reached.
- 6** The Working Group shall have no powers to commit to any expenditure.