

# STANDING ORDERS

## Widdrington Station and Stobswood Parish Council

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### 1. Introduction

Standing Orders regulate the proceedings and business of Widdrington Station and Stobswood Parish Council.

They are designed to ensure the council operates in a lawful, transparent and accountable manner and are based on the model Standing Orders produced by the National Association of Local Councils.

Standing Orders must be observed by all councillors and officers.

These Standing Orders operate alongside the Council's:

- Financial Regulations
- Code of Conduct
- Data Protection policies
- IT and Governance policies.

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### 2. Meetings of the Council

Council meetings shall be held in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972.

#### Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Council must take place:

- In May each year
- Within 14 days of the council elections (if applicable)

At the Annual Meeting the Council will:

- Elect a Chair
  - Elect a Vice Chair
  - Review council policies
  - Confirm committee structures
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## Ordinary Meetings

The council shall hold regular meetings as determined by the council.

A schedule of meetings should normally be set annually.

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## Extraordinary Meetings

Extraordinary meetings may be called:

- By the Chair
  - By the Clerk at the request of two councillors
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## 3. Notice of Meetings

Notice of meetings must:

- Be published at least **three clear days before the meeting**
- Be displayed on the council noticeboard
- Be published on the council website where possible

This requirement follows the Local Government Act 1972.

The agenda must be prepared by the Clerk in consultation with the Chair.

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## 4. Public Participation

Members of the public may attend council meetings in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

The council may provide a **public participation session** at the beginning of meetings.

During this session:

- Members of the public may speak on agenda items
- Speaking time may be limited (e.g. 3 minutes per person)

The Chair may exclude the public where confidential business is discussed.

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## 5. Quorum

The quorum for a meeting of the council shall be:

**One third of the total membership or three councillors, whichever is greater.**

If a meeting is not quorate it must be adjourned.

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## 6. Chair of the Meeting

The Chair shall preside over council meetings.

If the Chair is absent, the Vice Chair shall preside.

If both are absent, councillors present shall elect a Chair for that meeting.

The Chair's responsibilities include:

- Maintaining order
  - Ensuring fair debate
  - Managing the agenda
  - Calling votes
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## 7. Motions and Debate

A motion must:

- Be proposed by one councillor
- Be seconded by another councillor

The Chair may allow debate on the motion.

Amendments to motions may be proposed and must also be seconded.

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## 8. Voting

Voting shall normally be by **show of hands**.

Each councillor has one vote.

In the event of a tie, the Chair has a **casting vote**.

Voting results must be recorded in the minutes.

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## 9. Minutes

Minutes shall be recorded by the Clerk.

Minutes must:

- Record decisions and resolutions
- Be approved at the next council meeting
- Be signed by the Chair

Approved minutes must be published on the council website where possible.

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## 10. Committees and Working Groups

The council may establish committees or working groups.

Committees:

- Have delegated authority
- Must report to the council

Working groups:

- Provide recommendations only
- Do not have decision-making powers

Membership of committees must be approved by the council.

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## 11. Code of Conduct and Interests

Councillors must comply with the Council's Code of Conduct.

Councillors must declare **disclosable pecuniary interests** as required by the Localism Act 2011.

Where a councillor has a disclosable interest they must:

- Declare it
  - Leave the meeting during the discussion and vote.
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## 12. Disorderly Conduct

If a councillor behaves improperly, the Chair may:

- Request the councillor to stop speaking
- Require the councillor to leave the meeting

Persistent disorder may result in the meeting being adjourned.

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## 13. Confidential Business

The council may exclude the public and press for confidential matters such as:

- Staff matters
- Legal advice
- Commercially sensitive information

This must be resolved formally by the council.

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## 14. Rescinding Resolutions

A resolution may not be rescinded within six months unless:

- At least two councillors request it, or
- The council resolves to reconsider it.

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## 15. Financial Controls

Financial procedures shall follow the council's **Financial Regulations**, developed in accordance with guidance from the National Association of Local Councils.

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## 16. Standing Orders Generally

Standing Orders may be:

- Reviewed annually
- Amended by resolution of the council

Changes should follow guidance issued by the Society of Local Council Clerks and National Association of Local Councils.

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## 17. Suspension of Standing Orders

Standing Orders may be suspended by resolution of the council for a specific item of business.

Statutory requirements may **not** be suspended.

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## 18. Review of Standing Orders

Standing Orders should be reviewed:

- Annually
  - Following legislative changes
  - Following guidance updates from NALC or SLCC
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# Adoption

Adopted by:

**Widdrington Station and Stobswood Parish Council**

Date: 16<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Chair Signature: *J Bexfield*

Clerk Signature: *S Watson*