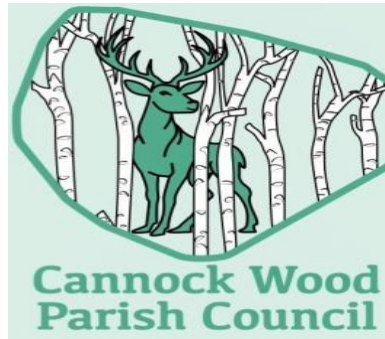


CANNOCK WOOD PARISH COUNCIL



You are hereby summoned to attend the next meeting of the Parish Council to be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 17th September 2026 @ Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw Village Hall Buds Road Cannock Wood.

If members of the public have a question/query or wish to give a report to the Parish Council. Please contact the Clerk by email to parish.council@cannockwood.org with the details, at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting.

COUNCIL MEETING

AGENDA

- 1. Welcome member.**
- 2. Apologies:**
- 3. Declaration of members' Interests**
 - a. Register of Interests: Councillors are reminded of the need to update their Register of Members Interests Forms.
 - b. To declare any Personal and Prejudicial Interest in items on the agenda and their nature. (Councillors with a Prejudicial Interest must leave the room at the relevant items). Where a member indicates they have a prejudicial interest but wish to make representation regarding the item before leaving the meeting, those representations must be made under item (c) Public Speaking below
- 4. Public Speaking**
 - a. At the start of the meeting a period of not more than fifteen minutes will be made available for members of the public and members and members of the Council to comment on any matter in the agenda.
 - b. If a County Council or District Council Member is in attendance, they will be given the opportunity to raise any relevant matter. Members declaring a prejudicial interest who wish to make representation or give evidence under the Code of Conduct relating to Agenda items shall do so at this stage.
- 5. Minutes -** To approve the minutes from the council meeting held on 16th July 2026
as a true and correct record.
- 6. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting Not on the Agenda**
To discuss items from the minutes not covered on the Agenda
- 7. Action Plan 2026-27**

8. Highways & Maintenance – potholes – hedgerows

9. To receive reports from Councillor's who have attended outside meetings.

10.Planning Applications for consideration and ratification

Application No.	Location/address	Details of Application	CWCP comment	Status
CH/26/140	Cairn Doon Buds Road Cannock Wood.	Proposed porch to front.	No objections	Approved 21 st July 2026
CH/26/203	Newlands Chestall Road Cannock Wood.	Permission in Principle for erection of new dwelling	Objections	Full refusal 27 th July 2026
CH/26/198	9 Bradwell Lane Cannock Wood	Proposed single storey side extension.		

11. Finance

a) Approve National Pay Award for Clerks 1st April to 31st March 2027.

b) Accounts paid and to be paid.

Date	Cheque Number	Payee	Details	Amount	VAT
17.09.26	Online	C E Gracey	Clerks September salary £248.96 gross + back pay £40	231.16	-
17.09.26	Online	HMRC	Clerks September PAYE	57.80	-
17.09.26	Online	CW and GVH	Hall Hire 17 th September 2026	30.00	- paid
17.09.26	DD	Hugo Fox	Website host July 2026 VAT Nr.	23.99	4.00
17.09.26	DD	Hugo Fox	Website host August 2026 VAT Nr.	23.99	4.00
17.09.26	Online	Netwise	Renewal domain name + email accounts. VAT Nr. 374 875 742	302.40	50.40 - paid
17.09.26	Online	Advanced Electrical Ltd	Replace defib damaged defib cabinet. VAT Nr. 161 450 141	192.00	32.00 - paid
17.09.26	Online	Greenhill Nursery	Replace damaged planter.	170.35	- paid
Total				£ 1031.69	£90.40

c)To approve the income received – £1047.04 VAT refund 2025-26.

d) To approve the financial statement 1st April to 31st July 2026

1stApril to 31st July 2026

Bank Reconciliation
Current Account 27,996.70

Total £27,996.70

Cash Book Balance
C/fwd(Incs) Election Reserves £25,742.59
Receipts 6,703.50
Payments 4,449.39
Balance @ 31st July 2026 £27,996.70

To approve the financial statement 1st April to 31st August 2026

1st April to 31st August 2026

Bank Reconciliation	Cash Book Balance	
Current Account £28,180.45	C/fwd(Incs) Election Reserves	£25,742.59
	Receipts	7,850.54
	Payments	5,412.68
<u>Total £28,180.45</u>	<u>Balance @ 31st August 2026</u>	<u>£28,180.45</u>

12. Parking outside the school

13. Anti-social behavior on the playing fields/ CW&GVH Car park/Parish -

14. Correspondence – Items of correspondence received during the month are

Email from CCDC about CILS fund emailed to council 14th August 2026.

SPCA calling for evidence for Local Government Re-organisation emailed to council 14th August 2026.

Email from resident re AED cabinet at the village hall, comments about the installation of the replacement cabinet, comments and photos passed on to the contractors that carried out the work 24th August 2026.

CCDC emails re: Nunswell Park proposed bird and bat boxes response emailed to council 24th August 2026.

SPCA details of National pay award for clerks 1st April to 31st March 2027 emailed to council 29th August 2026.

Staffordshire Federation of Women's email will details of a forthcoming Wellness Women Day emailed to lady councillors 10th September 2026.

Email from CCDC Councillor with comments about planning decisions emailed to council 10th September 2026.

Email from SPCA with details of NHP Survey emailed to council 10th September 2026.

Email from SPCA with details of a 2nd response from SCC about the pausing of SID installation permission emailed to council 10th September 2026.

Email from SPCA with details of council tax data across Staffordshire for information emailed to council 10th September 2026.

Email from CCDC with confirmation that we may co-opt to fill our Casual Councillor Vacancy emailed to council 10th September 2026.

SPCA notification that the LGR has been paused for the present time, emailed to council 10th September 2026.

SPCA email with details of Staffordshire Local Council Conference 2026 emailed to council 10th September 2026.

Outgoing Correspondence :

Email to CCDC re noise nuisance from Public House in Cannock Wood 13th August 2026.

Report to local PCSO about electric bike nuisance 13th August 2026.

SCC response to SID approval suspension 13th August 2026.

CCDC re: change of Planning + Infrastructure Act 2025 objections 13th August 2026.

Suzanne Wyke CCDC re: Nunswell plans bird and bat boxes 13th August 2026.

CCDC Election Services notification of casual vacancy 13th August 2026.

CCDC Development Services query on CH/26/198

CCDC CIL payments response 10th September 2026.

15. Environmental and Biodiversity – Nunswell Park – Gentleshaw Reservoir

16. Community Events –

17. Road Safety in the Parish – SID data.

18. Policies to review and approve :

Financial Regulations

Standing Orders
Grievance Policy
Disciplinary Policy
Training Policy
Code of conduct
Document Retention Policy
Risk Assessment

19. Health and Well Being Audit

20. Casual Councillor Vacancy – co-option

21. Items for Discussion/Future Agenda items

**22. Date of the next Council Meeting Thursday 15th October 2026 @ CW and GVH
Buds Road Cannock Wood @ 7.30pm**

I hope you will be able to attend the meeting

Cllr. Mrs Sue Janes - Chairman
Cannock Wood Parish Council



DRAFT Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday 16th July 2026 commencing at 7.30pm at Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall Buds Road Cannock Wood.

The Chairman Cllr. Sue Janes welcomed Members to this month's Council Meeting.

The Chairman reported that the following residents had passed away recently, several of whom had been previous serving councillors: Richard Poynton, Maureen Allen, Sharon Burns, Pat Croxstall, and Eddie Sharpe. Members spoke about the individuals many of which were stalwart in the parish organising and assisting with groups and events, all will be sadly missed. A minute silence was observed.

Council Meeting

PRESENT: Councillors: Sue Janes (Chairman), Steve Wroe (Vice-chairman), Pat Ansell, Avril Green, Fiona McMulkin, Elizabeth Whiteley, Paul Thomas.

IN ATTENDANCE: Clerk Chris Gracey

1. Minute number 741/2026: Apologies – Cllr. Rhys Mandry

2. Minute number 742/2026 Declarations of interest – None

The Chair reminded members to complete their Register of Interest form if there had been any changes to their circumstances, the clerk will send out the form. All councillor's addresses will be removed from the forms.

3. Minute number 743/2026 Public participation

Minute number 743/2026/A Members of the public – None

Minute number 743/2026/B County Cllr's. Report. – None

Minute number 743/2026/C District Cllr's Report. – None

4. Minute number 744/2026 To confirm and agree as a true record of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th June 2026.

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 11th June 2026 were accepted as a true and accurate record proposed by Cllr. Pat Ansell seconded by Cllr. Fiona McMulkin and carried.

16th July 2026

Cannock Wood PC Minutes

Chair initials.....

5. Minute number 745/2026 matters arising - Cllr. Avril Green commented on minute nr.724/2026, which she considered unfounded and incorrect.

6. Minute number 746/2026 Highways & Maintenance – Hedgerow – 84 Hayfield Hill covering the speed limit sign. 2 Sycamore Hill – hopefully both will be done by the landowner in early August.

7. Minutes number 747/2026 Action Plan – to be uploaded to the website.

8. Minutes number 748/2026 To receive reports from Councillors who have attended outside meetings:

The Chairman attended the Village Hall meeting, the roof area over the snooker hall has had a temporary repair and is now water tight. The internal decoration in that area will now go ahead.

9. Minute number 749/2026 Planning applications for consideration or determined

Application No.	Location/address	Details of application	CWPC Comments/status
CH/26/203	Newlands Chestall Road Cannock Wood	Permission in principle for erection of new dwelling.	Objections - due to the anticipated loss or damage of TPO'd trees to facilitate the development.

10. Minute number 750/2026 Finance

a)The following accounts are due to be paid or have been paid:

Date	online	Payee	Purpose	VAT	Amount
16.07.26	Online	C E Gracey	July salary £240.96	-	192.76
16.07.26	Online	HMRC	July PAYE	-	48.20
16.07.26	Online	CW +GVH	Hall hire 16/07/26	-	30.00
16.07.26	Online	C E Gracey	August salary £240.96	-	192.76
16.07.26	Online	HMRC	August PAYE	-	48.20
16.07.26	DD	Hugo Fox	Website hosting June 2026	4.00	23.99
16.07.26	Online	Katherine House Hospice	Grant	-	50.00
16.07.26	Cheque	Avril Green	Keys cut £24 and screws£9.59 for Castle Ring	-	33.59
16.07.26	Online	London Heart	Defib cabinet for CW+GVH	90.00	540.00
Total				£4.00	£1159.50

Cllr. Fiona McMulkin proposed, seconded by the Cllr. Pat Ansell and carried, that the payments be approved **Resolved: that the payments paid/ to be paid are approved.**

b) To approve income received – None

c) To approve the financial statements to 1st April to 30th June 2026

1st April to 30th June 2026

Bank Reconciliation		Cash Book Balance	
Current Account	29,501.59	C/fwd(Incs) Election Reserves	25,742.59
		Receipts	7,263.68
		Payments	3,504.66
<u>Total</u>	<u>£29,501.59</u>	<u>Balance @ 30th June 2026</u>	<u>£ 29,501.59</u>

The clerk presented the financial statements up to 30th June 2026 along with the bank statement to 30th June 2026 proposed by Cllr. Pat Ansell seconded by Cllr. Avril Green and carried.

d) Consider the purchase of a AED cabinet - Outside the Village Hall, members discussed the damaged cabinet and agreed to purchase a replacement, and get a quote for fitting from a previously used contractor. The clerk will order the cabinet.

11. Minute number 751/2026 – Parking outside the school – Although the school has closed for the Summer, Cllr. Steve Wroe (Vice-chairman) reported that there is still a problem with contractors parking across the footpath on Buds Road, it has happen twice recently and he has spoken to Cllr. Andrea Muckley about it.

12. Minute number 752/2026 – Anti-social behaviour on the playing fields/village hall and Parish - Cllr. Fiona McMulkin reported a problem with noise from the Park Gate PH, on several occasions she has been disturbed by noise from the gardens at the pub, when they've hosted an event with loud music. She has tried speaking to the landlord, the district council and the brewery and got where. The clerk will report the public house to Licensing at CCDC.

Cllr. Paul Thomas reported a nuisance of a petrol road bike which rushes around the parish at speed, the clerk will report it to PCSO.

13. Minutes number 753/2026 – Correspondence – Items of correspondence received during the month are emailed to Councillors, as received and for this month included the following:

Email from Highways Manager SCC about dropped kerbs emailed to council 28th June 2026.

Email from SSW. With draft plan for Gentleshaw Reservoir site emailed to council 28th June 2026. ***The clerk will respond to SSC with the points raised by the Vice-chairman and include points included in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy Consultation.***

Email from SPCA with details of National Landscape Cannock Chase emailed to council 29th June 2026.

SPCA Bulletin emailed to council 29th June 2026.

Email from SPCA with details of Local Nature Recovery Strategy Consultation emailed to council 29th June 2026.

Email from SPCA with details of the suspension of SID permissions emailed to council 29th June 2026. ***The council will object to the suspension.***

Outgoing Correspondence :

Email to County Cllr. Rhys Mandry about Clear Streets 28th June 2026.

14. Minute number 754/2026 – Environmental and Biodiversity – Nunswell –

Gentleshaw Reservoir – Response from SSW with a draft plan on the site, as discussed in correspondence a response will be sent. Nunswell – the clerk will contact CCDC as to when they will erect the bird and bat boxes as mentioned.

15. Minute number 755/2026 – Community Events – Summer Fair 20th June well received with many people attending and enjoying the fair weather and the facilities, thank you to everyone involved in organising the event. All profit was given to the Village Hall. Music Festival, Scarecrow event Heroes and villains 19th September 2026, the Vice-chairman asked for a budget of £150 for stationery and prizes, members agreed proposed by Cllrs. Avril Green and seconded by Pat Ansell. Members discussed the road closure for the Christmas event.

16. Minute Nr.756/2026 – Road safety in the parish – SID data to come.

17. Minute Nr.757/2026 – Policies to be reviewed and approved –

Financial Regulations – amended, proposed by Cllr. Fiona McMulkin seconded by Cllr. Pat Ansell and carried.

18. Minute Nr. 758/2026 - Items for Discussion and the Agenda for the next meeting – Cllr. Avril Green resigned, the Chairman, thanked Avril for her long service to the Parish Council and all her hard work in the parish.

19. Minute number 759/2026 – Date of the next meeting will be Thursday 17th September 2026 7.30pm at CW and GVH Buds Road Cannock Wood.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.02pm.

Cannock Wood Parish Council

Accounts for Payment 17th September 2026

The Parish Council are asked to approve the following accounts for payment at their meeting on 17th September 2026:

C E Gracey (Clerk's September salary £248.96 plus £40 back pay 2026-27 pay award)		online	231.16	-	231.16
HMRC(Clerk's September PAYE £57.80)	475/WE20800	online	57.80	-	57.80
CW and GVH (Hall hire 17 th September 2026 Council meeting)		online	30.00	-	30.00 - paid
Hugo Fox(Website host August 2026)	JWZ2J9Q	Direct debit	19.99	4.00	23.99 - paid
Advanced Electrical(Midlands)Ltd (Replace defib cabinet at CW+GVH)	26072040S - VAT 161 450 141	Online	160.00	32.00	192.00 - paid
Netwise UK (Renewal of domain name + email accounts 31/07/27 – 30/07/2027)	5192 – VAT 374 875 742	Online	252.00	50.40	302.40 - paid
Greenhill Nursery(Replace damaged planter)	109	Online	170.35	-	170.35 - paid
Total			£921.30	£86.40	£1,007.70

Income Received – £ 1147.04 (VAT refund 2025-26)

Other Issues – None

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Payment Cleared

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

RECEIPT AND PAYMENTS

Year to date 1st April to

31.08.26

	<i>Budget 2026-27</i>	<i>Current year under s137</i>	<i>Current year other powers</i>	<i>Year to date 31.08.26</i>
RECEIPTS				
Precept	£13,407			£6,703.50
VAT Refund				£921.92
Other Income				£921.92
Duplicate payments				
Total Income	£13,407			£6,703.50
PAYMENTS				
Salaries	£2,920	-	£963.84	£963.84
Other overheads (note 1)	£5,620	-	£1,297.43	£1,297.43
Community projects (note 2)	£8,540		£568.56	£568.56
Environment (footpaths, planting) (note 3)	£1,250	-	£219.50	£219.50
Community events (note 4)	£1,500	-	£250.06	£250.06
Grants made under s.137 (note 5)	£1,000		£50.00	£1,150.00
Total Expenditure	£ 20,830.00	-	£3,349.39	£4,449.39
RECEIPTS LESS PAYMENTS	£7,423	s137	other powers	£2,254.11
RESERVES				
Earmarked funds b/f				£13,500.00
General reserves b/f				£12,242.59
Total Reserves b/f	£25,743			£25,742.59
Increase / (decrease) during year	£7,423			£2,254.11
Total reserves end of year c/f	£18,320			£27,996.70

s.137 amount per elector	£	11.10
S.137 maximum allowed (assuming 800 electors)	£	8,880.00
s.137 expenditure	£	-
s.137 maximum exceeded?		no

CANNOCK WOOD PARISH COUNCIL
NOTES TO THE RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

	Budget 2026-27	Current year under s137	Current year other powers	Year to date 31.08.26
1 Overheads				
Staff Costs	£2,920		£963.84	£963.84
Insurance	£575		£558.05	£558.05
Room hire			£120.00	£120.00
Subscriptions	£375		£367.20	£367.42
Website, emails and domain names			£95.96	£95.96
Internal audit	£500		£156.00	£156.00
Other	£1,250			-
	£5,620		£2,261.05	£2,261.27
2 Community projects				
Christmas tree	£1,000		-	-
Speed indicator devices			-	-
Speedwatch signage and battery			-	-
Defibrillators			£540.00	£540.00
Bench and installation			-	-
Temporary road closure signs and cones			-	-
Repair and replacement of planter				-
<i>Community projects (unspecified)</i>	£7,000			£28.56
Community projects total	£8,000	-	£540.00	£568.56
3 Environment (footpaths, planting and biodiversity)				
Planters seasonal display			£180.00	£180.00
Bulbs and perennial plants			-	-
Leaf collection and footpath clearance			-	-
Biodiversity initiatives (Bee Squared)			£39.50	£39.50
Licences (planting and brown bin)			-	-
<i>Environment (unspecified)</i>	£1,250			
Environment total	£1,250	-	£219.50	£219.50
4 Community events				
Spring event			-	-
Autumn event				-
Photo competition			£250.06	£250.06
<i>Community events (unspecified)</i>	£1,500			
Community events total	£1,500	-	£250.06	£250.06
5 Grants				
Village Hall				£500.00
Playing Field				-
First responders/hospices				-
Midsummer Fair				-
Welfare committee Xmas meal (grant)				-
<i>Other grants (unspecified)</i>	£1,000		£50.00	£650.00

Other grants total

£1,000	-	£50.00	£1,150.00
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Code of Conduct 2020

Introduction

The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed this Model Councillor Code of Conduct, in association with key partners and after extensive consultation with the sector, as part of its work on supporting all tiers of local government to continue to aspire to high standards of leadership and performance. It is a template for councils to adopt in whole and/or with local amendments.

All councils are required to have a local Councillor Code of Conduct.

The LGA will undertake an annual review of this Code to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose, incorporating advances in technology, social media and changes in legislation. The LGA can also offer support, training and mediation to councils and councillors on the application of the Code and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the county associations of local councils can offer advice and support to town and parish councils.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “councillor” means a member or co-opted member of a local authority or a directly elected mayor. A “co-opted member” is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who

- a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
- b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, “local authority” includes county councils, district councils, London borough councils, parish councils, town councils, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, joint authorities, economic prosperity boards, combined authorities and National Park authorities.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.

General Principles of Councillor Conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- You misuse your position as a councillor
- Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as councillor.

This Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- At face-to-face meetings
- At online or telephone meetings
- In written communication

Cannock Wood Parish Council

- In verbal communication
- In non-verbal communication
- In electronic and social media communication, posts, statements, and comments.

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a councillor.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct. Town and parish councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer.

Standards of Councillor Conduct

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

General Conduct

1. Respect

As a councillor:

1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.

1.2 I treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory, or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the local authority's councillor-officer protocol.

2. Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination

As a councillor:

2.1 I do not bully any person.

2.2 I do not harass any person.

2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

3. Impartiality of Officers of the Council

As a councillor:

3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

4. Confidentiality and Access to Information

As a councillor:

4.1 I do not disclose information:

- a. Given to me in confidence by anyone**
- b. Acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless**
 - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it**
 - ii. I am required by law to do so**
 - iii. The disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or**
 - iv. The disclosure is:**
 - 1. Reasonable and in the public interest; and**
 - 2. Made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and**
 - 3. I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.**

4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.

4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the local authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

5. Disrepute

As a councillor:

5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute

As a councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in you or your local authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

6. Use of Position

As a councillor:

6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage or myself or anyone else.

Your position as a member of the local authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

7. Use of Local Authority Resources and Facilities

As a councillor:

7.1 I do not misuse council resources.

7.2 I will, when using the resources of the local authority or authorising their use by others:

- a. Act in accordance with the local authority's requirements; and**
- b. Ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of functions of the local authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

Examples include:

- Office support
- Stationery
- Equipment such as phones, and computers
- Transport
- Access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the local authority's own policies regarding their use.

8. Complying with the Code of Conduct

As a councillor:

- 8.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority**
- 8.2 I co-operate with any Code of Conduct Investigation and / or determination.**
- 8.3 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.**
- 8.4 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.**

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine the public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the local authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

Protection your Reputation and the Reputation of the Local Authority

9. Interests

As a councillor:

- 9.1 I register and disclose my interests.**

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority.

You need to register your interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in **table 1**, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Monitoring Officer.

10. Gifts and Hospitality

As a councillor:

- 10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**
- 10.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of receipt.**
- 10.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts or hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Registering Interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in “The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012”. You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

“Disclosable Pecuniary Interest” means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner’s interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

“Partner” means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A ‘sensitive interest’ is an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a ‘sensitive interest’ you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non-participation in case of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a ‘sensitive interest’, you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.
5. [Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.]

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in

the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
 - a. Your own financial interest or well-being;
 - b. A financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or
 - c. A financial interest or well-being of a body included under Other Registerable Interests as set out in **Table 2**

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing the interest the following test should also be applied.

9. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above) **affects** the financial interest or well-being:
 - a. To a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
 - b. A reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive' interest, you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

10. [Where you have an Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.]

Table 1**Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#)

Subject	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 council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. 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 made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) 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 and Property	Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council. ‘Land’ excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
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 the councillor’s knowledge) –

Cannock Wood Parish Council

Subject	Description
	(a) the landlord is the council; and (b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/ civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.
Securities	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where— (a) that body (to the councillor's 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 councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners have a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

**director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* '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.

Other Registerable Interests

You must register as an Other Registerable Interest:

- a) any unpaid directorships
- b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- c) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

CANNOCK WOOD PARISH COUNCIL

DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Introduction

- 1 This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>). It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work.

https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf

The policy is designed to help Council employees improve unsatisfactory conduct and performance in their job. Wherever possible, the Council will try to resolve its concerns about employees' behaviour informally, without starting the formal procedure set out below.

- 2 The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- 3 This policy confirms:
 - informal coaching and supervision will be considered, where appropriate, to improve conduct and / or attendance
 - the Council will fully investigate the facts of each case
 - the Council recognises that misconduct and unsatisfactory work performance are different issues. The disciplinary policy will also apply to work performance issues to ensure that all alleged instances of employees' underperformance are dealt with fairly and in a way that is consistent with required standards. However, the disciplinary policy will only be used when performance management proves ineffective. For more information see ACAS "Performance Management" at <https://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=6608>
 - employees will be informed in writing about the nature of the complaint against them and given the opportunity to state their case
 - employees will be provided, where appropriate, with written copies of evidence and relevant witness statements in advance of a disciplinary hearing
 - employees may be accompanied or represented by a companion – a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official - at any investigatory, disciplinary or appeal meeting. The companion is permitted to address such meetings, to put the employee's case and confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the

meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case

- the Council will give employees reasonable notice of any meetings in this procedure. Employee must make all reasonable efforts to attend. Failure to attend any meeting may result in it going ahead and a decision being taken. An employee who does not attend a meeting will be given the opportunity to be represented and to make written submissions
- if the employee's companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date
- any changes to specified time limits in the Council's procedure must be agreed by the employee and the Council
- information about an employee's disciplinary matter will be restricted to those involved in the disciplinary process. A record of the reason for disciplinary action and the action taken by the Council is confidential to the employee. The employee's disciplinary records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the disciplinary procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- employees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary decision. The appeal decision is final
- if an employee who is already subject to the Council's disciplinary procedure raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after the completion of the disciplinary procedure
- disciplinary action taken by the Council can include a written warning, final written warning or dismissal
- this procedure may be implemented at any stage if the employee's alleged misconduct warrants this
- except for gross misconduct when an employee may be dismissed without notice, the Council will not dismiss an employee on the first occasion that it decides there has been misconduct
- if an employee is suspended following allegations of misconduct, it will be on full pay and only for such time as is necessary. Suspension is not a disciplinary sanction. The Council will write to the employee to confirm any period of suspension and the reasons for it,
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the disciplinary procedure where appropriate (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process that requires the consent of affected parties

Examples of misconduct

- 4 Misconduct is employee behaviour that can lead to the employer taking disciplinary action. The following list contains some examples of misconduct: The list is not exhaustive.
- unauthorised absence
 - poor timekeeping
 - misuse of the Council's resources and facilities including telephone, email and internet
 - inappropriate behaviour
 - refusal to follow reasonable instructions
 - breach of health and safety rules.

Examples of gross misconduct

- 5 Gross misconduct is misconduct that is so serious that it is likely to lead to dismissal without notice. The following list contains some examples of gross misconduct: The list is not exhaustive
- bullying, discrimination and harassment
 - incapacity at work because of alcohol or drugs
 - violent behaviour
 - fraud or theft
 - gross negligence
 - gross insubordination
 - serious breaches of council policies and procedures e.g. the Health and Safety Policy, Equality and Diversity Policy, Data Protection Policy and any policies regarding the use of information technology
 - serious and deliberate damage to property
 - use of the internet or email to access pornographic, obscene or offensive material
 - disclosure of confidential information.

Suspension

- 6 If allegations of gross misconduct or serious misconduct are made, the council may suspend the employee while further investigations are carried out. Suspension will be on full pay. Suspension does not imply any determination of guilt or innocence, as it is merely a measure to enable further investigation.
- 7 While on suspension, the employee is required to be available during normal hours of work in the event that the council needs to make contact. The employee must not

contact or attempt to contact or influence anyone connected with the investigation in any way or to discuss this matter with any other employee or councillor.

- 8 The employee must not attend work. The council will make arrangements for the employee to access any information or documents required to respond to any allegations.

Examples of unsatisfactory work performance

- 9 The following list contains some examples of unsatisfactory work performance: The list is not exhaustive.
 - inadequate application of management instructions/office procedures
 - inadequate IT skills
 - unsatisfactory management of staff
 - unsatisfactory communication skills.

The Procedure

- 10 Preliminary enquiries. The council may make preliminary enquiries to establish the basic facts of what has happened in order to understand whether there may be a case to answer under the disciplinary procedure.

If the employee's manager believes there may be a disciplinary case to answer, the council may initiate a more detailed investigation undertaken to establish the facts of a situation or to establish the perspective of others who may have witnessed misconduct.

- 11 Informal Procedures. Where minor concerns about conduct become apparent, it is the manager's responsibility to raise this with the employee and clarify the improvements required. A file note will be made and kept by the manager. The informal discussions are not part of the formal disciplinary procedure. If the conduct fails to improve, or if further matters of conduct become apparent, the manager may decide to formalise the discussions and invite the employee to a first stage disciplinary hearing.

Disciplinary investigation

- 12 A formal disciplinary investigation may sometimes be required to establish the facts and whether there is a disciplinary case to answer.
- 13 If a formal disciplinary investigation is required, the Council will appoint an Investigator who will be responsible for undertaking a fact-finding exercise to collect all relevant information. The Investigator will be independent and will normally be a councillor. If there are no councillors who are independent (for example, because they all have direct involvement in the allegations about the employee), it will appoint someone from outside the Council. The Investigator will be appointed as soon as possible after the

allegations have been made. The Council will inform the Investigator of the terms of reference of the investigation. The terms of reference should specify:

- the allegations or events that the investigation is required to examine
- whether a recommendation is required
- how the findings should be presented. For example, an investigator will often be required to present the findings in the form of a written report
- who the findings should be reported to and who to contact for further direction if unexpected issues arise or advice is needed.

- 14 The Investigator will be asked to submit their findings within 20 working days of appointment where possible. In cases of alleged unsatisfactory performance or of allegations of minor misconduct, the appointment of an investigator may not be necessary and the Council may decide to commence disciplinary proceedings at the next stage - the disciplinary meeting (see paragraph 22).
- 15 The Council will notify the employee in writing of the alleged misconduct and details of the person undertaking the investigation. The employee may be asked to meet an investigator as part of the disciplinary investigation. The employee will be given sufficient notice of the meeting with the Investigator so that he/she has reasonable time to prepare for it. The letter will explain the investigatory process and that the meeting is part of that process. The employee will be provided with a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure. The Council will also inform the employee that when he/she meets with the Investigator, he/she will have the opportunity to comment on the allegations of misconduct.
- 16 Employees may be accompanied or represented by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official at any investigatory meeting.
- 17 If there are other persons (e.g. employees, councillors, members of the public or the Council's contractors) who can provide relevant information, the Investigator should try to obtain it from them in advance of the meeting with the employee.
- 18 The Investigator has no authority to take disciplinary action. His/her role is to establish the facts of the case as quickly as possible and prepare a report that recommends to the Council whether or not disciplinary action should be considered under the policy.
- 19 The Investigator's report will contain his/her recommendations and the findings on which they were based. He/she will recommend either:
 - the employee has no case to answer and there should no further action under the Council's disciplinary procedure
 - the matter is not serious enough to justify further use of the disciplinary procedure and can be dealt with informally or

- the employee has a case to answer and a formal hearing should be convened under the Council's disciplinary procedure.
- 20 The Investigator will submit the report to the Council which will decide whether further action will be taken.
- 21 If the Council decides that it will not take disciplinary action, it may consider whether mediation would be appropriate in the circumstances.

The disciplinary meeting

- 22 If the Council decides that there is a case to answer, it will appoint a staffing sub-committee of three councillors, to formally hear the allegations. The staffing sub-committee will appoint a Chair from one of its members. The Investigator shall not sit on the sub-committee.
- 23 No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee. The employee will be invited, in writing, to attend a disciplinary meeting. The sub-committee's letter will confirm the following:
- the names of its Chair and other two members
 - details of the alleged misconduct, its possible consequences and the employee's statutory right to be accompanied at the meeting
 - a copy of the information provided to the sub-committee which may include the investigation report, supporting evidence and a copy of the Council's disciplinary procedure
 - the time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the hearing so that he /she has sufficient time to prepare for it
 - that witnesses may attend on the employee's and the Council's behalf and that both parties should inform each other of their witnesses' names at least two working days before the meeting
 - that the employee may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official

The purpose of the disciplinary meeting hearing is for the allegations to be put to the employee and then for the employee to give their perspective. It will be conducted as follows:

- the Chair will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee and explain the arrangements for the hearing
- the Chair will set out the allegations and invite the Investigator to present the findings of the investigation report (if there has been a previous investigation)
- the Chair will invite the employee to present their account
- the employee (or the companion) will set out his/her case and present evidence (including any witnesses and/or witness statements)

- any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question the Investigator and any witness
 - the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up
- 24 The Chair will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision with reasons, in writing, within five working days of the meeting. The Chair will also notify the employee of the right to appeal the decision.
- 25 The disciplinary meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be further investigated by the sub-committee.

Disciplinary action

- 26 If the sub-committee decides that there should be disciplinary action, it may be any of the following:

First written warning

If the employee's conduct has fallen beneath acceptable standards, a first written warning will be issued. A first written warning will set out:

- the reason for the written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

Final written warning

If the offence is sufficiently serious, or if there is further misconduct or a failure to improve sufficiently during the currency of a prior warning, the employee will be given a final written warning. A final written warning will set out:

- the reason for the final written warning, the improvement required (if appropriate) and the time period for improvement
- that further misconduct/failure to improve will result in more serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal
- the employee's right of appeal
- that a note confirming the final written warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file, that a copy will be provided to the employee and that the warning will remain in force for a specified period of time (e.g. 12 months).

Dismissal

The Council may dismiss:

- for gross misconduct
- if there is no improvement within the specified time period, in the conduct which has been the subject of a final written warning
- if another instance of misconduct has occurred and a final written warning has already been issued and remains in force.

- 27 The Council will consider very carefully a decision to dismiss. If an employee is dismissed, he/she will receive a written statement of the reasons for his/her dismissal, the date on which the employment will end and details of his/her right of appeal. If the sub-committee decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file. Action taken as a result of the disciplinary meeting will remain in force unless it is modified as a result of an appeal.

The appeal

- 28 An employee who is the subject of disciplinary action will be notified of the right of appeal. His/her written notice of appeal must be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving written notice of the disciplinary action and must specify the grounds for appeal.
- 29 The grounds for appeal include;
- a failure by the Council to follow its disciplinary policy
 - the sub-committee's disciplinary decision was not supported by the evidence
 - the disciplinary action was too severe in the circumstances of the case
 - new evidence has come to light since the disciplinary meeting.
- 30 Where possible, the appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the Council who have not previously been involved in the case. This includes the Investigator. The appeal panel will appoint a Chair from one of its members.
- 31 The employee will be notified, in writing, within 10 working days of receipt of the notice of appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a companion - a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.
- 32 At the appeal meeting, the Chair will:
- introduce the panel members to the employee
 - explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the disciplinary decision
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.

- 33 The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds for appeal.
- 34 The Chair will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, usually within five working days of the appeal hearing.
- 35 The appeal panel may decide to uphold the disciplinary decision of the Council, substitute a less serious sanction or decide that no disciplinary action is necessary. If it decides to take no disciplinary action, no record of the matter will be retained on the employee's personnel file.
- 36 If an appeal against dismissal is upheld, the employee will be paid in full for the period from the date of dismissal and continuity of service will be preserved.
- 37 The appeal panel's decision is final.

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Last Reviewed: September

2024

Next Review: September

2026

CANNOCK WOOD PARISH COUNCIL

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Introduction

1. This policy is based on and complies with the 2015 ACAS Code of Practice (<http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2174>). It also takes account of the ACAS guide on discipline and grievances at work. (https://www.acas.org.uk/media/1043/Discipline-and-grievances-at-work-The-Acas-guide/pdf/DG_Guide_Feb_2019.pdf). It aims to encourage and maintain good relationships between the Council and its employees by treating grievances seriously and resolving them as quickly as possible. It sets out the arrangements for employees to raise their concerns, problems or complaints about their employment with the Council. The policy will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
2. Many problems can be raised and settled during the course of everyday working relationships. Employees should aim to settle most grievances informally with their line manager.
3. This policy confirms:
 - employees have the right to be accompanied or represented at a grievance meeting or appeal by a companion who can be a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official. This includes any meeting held with them to hear about, gather facts about, discuss, consider or resolve their grievance. The companion will be permitted to address the grievance/appeal meetings, to present the employee's case for his /her grievance/appeal and to confer with the employee. The companion cannot answer questions put to the employee, address the meeting against the employee's wishes or prevent the employee from explaining his/her case.
 - the Council will give employees reasonable notice of the date of the grievance/appeal meetings. Employees and their companions must make all reasonable efforts to attend. If the companion is not available for the proposed date of the meeting, the employee can request a postponement and can propose an alternative date that is within five working days of the original meeting date unless it is unreasonable not to propose a later date
 - any changes to specified time limits must be agreed by the employee and the Council
 - an employee has the right to appeal against the decision about his/her grievance. The appeal decision is final

- information about an employee's grievance will be restricted to those involved in the grievance process. A record of the reason for the grievance, its outcome and action taken is confidential to the employee. The employee's grievance records will be held by the Council in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- audio or video recordings of the proceedings at any stage of the grievance procedure are prohibited, unless agreed by all affected parties as a reasonable adjustment that takes account of an employee's medical condition
- if an employee who is already subject to a disciplinary process raises a grievance, the grievance will normally be heard after completion of the disciplinary procedure
- if a grievance is not upheld, no disciplinary action will be taken against an employee if he/she raised the grievance in good faith
- the Council may consider mediation at any stage of the grievance procedure where appropriate, (for example where there have been communication breakdowns or allegations of bullying or harassment). Mediation is a dispute resolution process which requires the consent of affected parties
- Employees can use all stages of the grievance procedure If the complaint is not a code of conduct complaint about a councillor. Employees can use the informal stage of the council's grievance procedure (paragraph 4) to deal with all grievance issues, including a complaint about a councillor Employees cannot use the formal stages of the council's grievance procedure for a code of conduct complaint about a councillor. If the complaint about the councillor is not resolved at the informal stage, the employee can contact the monitoring officer of Cannock Wood Parish Council who will inform the employee whether or not the complaint can be dealt with under the code of conduct. If it does not concern the code of conduct, the employee can make a formal complaint under the council's grievance procedure (see paragraph 5)
- If the grievance is a code of conduct complaint against a councillor, the employee cannot proceed with it beyond the informal stage of the council's grievance procedure. However, whatever the complaint, the council has a duty of care to its employees. It must take all reasonable steps to ensure employees have a safe working environment, for example by undertaking risk assessments, by ensuring staff and councillors are properly trained and by protecting staff from bullying, harassment and all forms of discrimination
- If an employee considers that the grievance concerns his or her safety within the working environment, whether or not it also concerns a complaint against a councillor, the employee should raise these safety concerns with his or her line manager at the informal stage of the grievance procedure. The council will consider whether it should take further action in this matter in accordance with any of its employment policies (for example its health and safety policy or its dignity at work policy) and in accordance with the code of conduct regime

Informal grievance procedure

4. The Council and its employees benefit if grievances are resolved informally and as quickly as possible. As soon as a problem arises, the employee should raise it with his/her manager to see if an informal solution is possible. Both should try to resolve the matter at this stage. If the employee does not want to discuss the grievance with his/her manager (for example, because it concerns the manager), the employee should contact the Chair or, if appropriate, another Councillor. If the employee's complaint is about a councillor, it may be appropriate to involve that councillor at the informal stage. This will require both the employee's and the councillor's consent.

Formal grievance procedure

5. If it is not possible to resolve the grievance informally and the employee's complaint is not one that should be dealt with as a code of conduct complaint (see above), the employee may submit a formal grievance. It should be submitted in writing to the Chair.
6. The Council will appoint a sub-committee of three members to hear the grievance. The sub-committee will appoint a Chair from one of its members. No councillor with direct involvement in the matter shall be appointed to the sub-committee.

Investigation

7. If the sub-committee decides that it is appropriate, (e.g. if the grievance is complex), it may appoint an investigator to carry out an investigation before the grievance meeting to establish the facts of the case. The investigation may include interviews (e.g. the employee submitting the grievance, other employees, councillors or members of the public).
8. The investigator will summarise their findings (usually within an investigation report) and present their findings to the sub-committee.

Notification

9. Within 10 working days of the Council receiving the employee's grievance (this may be longer if there is an investigation), the employee will normally be asked, in writing, to attend a grievance meeting. The written notification will include the following:
 - the names of its Chair and other members
 - the date, time and place for the meeting. The employee will be given reasonable notice of the meeting which will normally be within 25 working days of when the Council received the grievance

- the employee's right to be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official
- a copy of the Council's grievance policy
- confirmation that, if necessary, witnesses may attend (or submit witness statements) on the employee's behalf and that the employee should provide the names of his/her witnesses as soon as possible before the meeting
- confirmation that the employee will provide the Council with any supporting evidence in advance of the meeting, usually with at least two days' notice
- findings of the investigation if there has been an investigation
- an invitation for the employee to request any adjustments to be made for the hearing (for example where a person has a health condition).

The grievance meeting

10. At the grievance meeting:

- the Chair will introduce the members of the sub-committee to the employee
- the employee (or companion) will set out the grievance and present the evidence
- the Chair will ask the employee questions about the information presented and will want to understand what action does he/she wants the Council to take
- any member of the sub-committee and the employee (or the companion) may question any witness
- the employee (or companion) will have the opportunity to sum up the case
- a grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters that were raised during the meeting to be investigated by the sub-committee.

11. The Chair will provide the employee with the sub-committee's decision, in writing, usually within five working days of the meeting. The letter will notify the employee of the action, if any, that the Council will take and of the employee's right to appeal.

The appeal

12. If an employee decides that his/her grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved by the sub-committee, he/she may submit a written appeal to the Chair. An appeal must be received by the Council within five working days of the employee receiving the sub-committee's decision and must specify the grounds of appeal.

13. Appeals may be raised on a number of grounds, e.g.:

- a failure by the Council to follow its grievance policy
- the decision was not supported by the evidence
- the action proposed by the sub-committee was inadequate/inappropriate
- new evidence has come to light since the grievance meeting.

14. The appeal will be heard by a panel of three members of the Council who have not previously been involved in the case. The appeal panel will appoint a Chair from one of its members.
15. The employee will be notified, in writing, usually within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal of the time, date and place of the appeal meeting. The meeting will normally take place within 25 working days of the Council's receipt of the appeal. The employee will be advised that he/she may be accompanied by a workplace colleague, a trade union representative or a trade union official.
16. At the appeal meeting, the Chair will:
 - introduce the panel members to the employee
 - explain the purpose of the meeting, which is to hear the employee's reasons for appealing against the decision of the staffing sub-committee
 - explain the action that the appeal panel may take.
17. The employee (or companion) will be asked to explain the grounds of appeal.
18. The Chair will inform the employee that he/she will receive the decision and the panel's reasons, in writing, within five working days of the appeal meeting.
19. The appeal panel may decide to uphold the decision or substitute its own decision.
20. The decision of the appeal panel is final.

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Last Reviewed: September

2024

Next Review: September

2026

Cannock Wood Parish Council Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a systematic general examination of working conditions, workplace activities and environmental factors that will enable the Parish Council to identify any and all potential inherent risks. The Parish Council, based on a recorded assessment, will take all practical and necessary steps to reduce or eliminate the risks, insofar as is practically possible.

This document has been produced to enable Cannock Wood Parish Council to assess the risks that it faces and satisfy itself that it has taken adequate steps to minimise them.

FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT

Subject	Risk(s) indentified	H/M/L	Management/control of Risk	Review/Assess/Revise
Precept	Adequacy of precept in order for the Council to carry out its Statutory duties	L	To determine the precept amount required, the Council regularly receives budget update information. At the precept meeting Council receives a budget report, including actual position and projected position to the end of year and indicative figures or costings obtained by the Clerk. With this information the Council maps out the required monies for standing costs and projects for the following year and applies specific figures to budget headings, the total of which is resolved to be the precept amount to be requested from Cannock Chase Council. The figure is submitted by the Clerk in writing. The Clerk informs the Council when the monies are received.	Existing procedure adequate.
Financial Records	Inadequate records Financial irregularities	L L	The Council has Financial Regulations which sets out the requirements.	Existing procedure adequate Review the Financial regulations when necessary
Bank and banking	Inadequate checks	L	The Council has Financial Regulations which set out	Existing procedure adequate

	Banks mistakes	L	banking requirements Monthly reconciliation	Existing procedure adequate
Reporting and auditing	Information communication	L	Financial information is a regular agenda item (Finance Report) and discussed/reviewed and approved at each meeting.	Existing procedures adequate.
Grants	Receipt of grant	L	Parish Council does not presently receive any regular grants.	Procedure would be formed, if required
Grants and support payable	Power to pay Authorisation of Council to pay	L	All such expenditure goes through the required Council process of approval, minuted and listed accordingly if a payment is made using S137 powers of expenditure.	Existing procedure adequate.
Best value accountability	Work awarded Incorrectly. Overspend on services.	L M	Normal Parish Council practice would be to seek, if possible, more than one quotation for any substantial work to be undertaken. For major work competitive tenders would be sought. If problems encountered with a contract the Clerk would investigate the situation and report to the Council.	Existing procedure adequate. Include when reviewing Financial regulations.
Employees	Fraud by staff Health and safety	L L	Requirements of Fidelity Guarantee insurance adhered to with regards to fraud. All employees to be provided adequate direction and safety equipment needed to undertake their roles	Existing procedures adequate. Monitor health and safety requirements and insurance annually.
VAT	Reclaiming	L	The Council reclaim the VAT over a 3 year period	Existing procedures adequate
Annual Return	Submit within time	L	The Annual Return is completed and submitted online with	Existing procedures

	limits		the prescribed time frame by the Clerk. Annual Return completed and signed by the Council, submitted to internal auditor for completion and signing then checked and sent to External Auditor within time frame.	adequate.
Legal Powers	Illegal activity or payments	L	All activity and payments within the powers of the Parish Council to be resolved at full Council Meetings, including reference to the power used under the Finance section of agenda and Finance report monthly.	Existing procedures adequate
Minutes/agendas/ Notices Statutory Documents`	Accuracy and legality	L	Minutes and agenda are produced in the prescribed manor by the Clerk and adhere to the legal requirements. Minutes are approved and signed at the next Council meeting.	Existing procedures adequate.
	Business conduct	L	Agenda displayed according to legal requirements. Business conducted at Council meetings should be managed by the Chair	Members adhere to Code of Conduct
Members interests	Conflict of interests Register of members interests	L M	Declarations of interest by members at Council meetings. Register of Members Interests forms reviewed regularly.	Existing procedures adequate. Members take responsibility to update register.
Insurance	Adequacy Cost Compliance Fidelity Guarantee	L L L M	An annual review is undertaken of all insurance arrangements. Employers liabilities a necessity and within policies. Ensure compliance measures are in place. Fidelity checks in place.	Existing procedure adequate. Insurance reviewed annually.
Data protection	Policy provision	L	The Parish Council is registered with the Data Protection Agency	Ensure annual renewal of registration
Freedom of	Policy	L	The Council has a Model Publication scheme in place. To	Monitor any requests made

Information	Provision	M	date there has been no requests under FOI. The Parish Council is aware that if a substantial request came in it could create a number of additional hours work. The Parish Council can request a fee to supplement the extra hours	under FOI
PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT OR AREAS				
Notice Board	Risk of damage	L	The Parish Council currently has one notice board. No formal inspection procedures are in place but any reports of damage or faults are reported to the Parish Council and dealt with in accordance of the correct procedures of the Council.	Existing procedures adequate
Meeting locations	Adequacy Health & Safety	L M	The Parish Council meeting is held in a venue considered to have appropriate facilities for the Clerk, members and the general public.	Existing procedures adequate
Council records – paper	Loss through: Theft Fire damage	L L L	The Parish Council records are stored at the home of the Clerk. Records include historical correspondences, minutes, insurance, bank records. The documents are archived in the Clerk's loft	Damage (apart from fire) and theft is unlikely and so provision is adequate.
Council records – electronic	Loss through: Theft, fire damage or corruption of computer	L L	The Parish Council electronic records are stored on the Clerk's laptop held at her home. Back ups of electronic data is made at regular intervals	Existing procedures considered adequate

Cannock Wood Parish Council
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Approved 17th September 2026

Note: Standing orders that are in bold type contain legal and statutory requirements.

1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

- a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chairman of the meeting.
- b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- d If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
- f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.
- g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chairman of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chairman.
- h A councillor may move an amendment to his own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- j Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chairman of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.
- l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
- m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;

- iv. to give a personal explanation; or
- v. to exercise a right of reply.
- p During the debate on 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 he considers has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
 - i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put the motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.
- t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed five minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chairman of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.
- b If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chairman of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.
- c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the chairman of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

3. MEETINGS GENERALLY

Full Council meetings

- a **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.**
- b **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include 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 or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
- c **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice.**
- d **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.**
- e Members of the public may make representations, answer questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.
- f The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed fifteen minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
- g Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than five minutes.
- h In accordance with standing order 3(e), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chairman of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.
- i A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort). The chairman of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.
- j A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the chairman of the meeting.
- k Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chairman of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.
- l **Subject to standing order 3(m), a person who attends a meeting is permitted to report on the meeting whilst the meeting is open to the**

public. To “report” means to film, photograph, make an audio recording of meeting proceedings, use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear the meeting as it takes place or later or to report or to provide oral or written commentary about the meeting so that the report or commentary is available as the meeting takes place or later to persons not present.

- m **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- n **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- o **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman of the Council may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one).**
- p **The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- q **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**
- r **The chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**

See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.

- s **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a 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 his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.**
- t **The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:**
 - i. the time and place of the meeting;
 - ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
 - iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors

with voting rights;

- v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
 - vi. if there was a public participation session; and
 - vii. the resolutions made.
- u **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.**
- v **No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.**
- See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.*
- w **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.
- x A meeting shall not exceed a period of two and a half hours.

4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- a **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
- b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
- c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
- d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
 - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;

- v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer seven days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
- vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chairman of the standing committee;
- vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
- viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;
- ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
- x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
- xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
- xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

5. **ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS**

- a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office.**
- b **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.**
- c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**
- d **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 decides.**
- e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council.**
- f **The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- g **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if there is one, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- h **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman**

of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

- i **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:
 - i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council and councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, delivery by the Chairman of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
 - iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;
 - iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;
 - v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;
 - vi. Review of the terms of reference for committees;
 - vii. Appointment of members to existing committees;
 - viii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;
 - ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
 - x. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses.
 - xi. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
 - xii. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
 - xiii. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
 - xiv. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
 - xv. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
 - xvi. Review of the Council's complaints procedure;

- xvii. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (see also *standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);
- xviii. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;
- xix. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;
- xx. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.
- xxi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

6. **EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a **The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
- b **If the Chairman of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**
- c The chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or the sub-committee] at any time.
- d If the chairman of a committee [or a sub-committee] does not call an extraordinary meeting within seven days of having been requested to do so by two members of the committee [or the sub-committee], any two members of the committee [or the sub-committee] may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee [or a sub-committee].

7. **PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS**

- a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least three councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.
- b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

8. **VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS**

- a Where more than two 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. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote

exercisable by the chairman of the meeting.

9. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least ten clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least six clear days before the meeting.
- e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman 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 in the agenda or rejected.
- f The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
- g Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
- h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
 - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
 - ii. to move to a vote;
 - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
 - iv. to refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;
 - v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
 - vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;

- vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
- viii. to require a written report;
- ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;
- x. to extend the time limits for speaking;
- xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
- xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
- xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
- xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
- xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
- xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or
- xvii. to close the meeting.

11. **MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION**

See also standing order 20.

- a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data.**
- b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
- c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**
- d **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

12. **DRAFT MINUTES**

Full Council meetings

- a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved

for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.

- b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order 10(a)(i).
- c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chairman of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d If the chairman of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, he shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

“The chairman of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the () held on [date] in respect of () were a correct record but his view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- e **If the Council’s gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**
- f Subject to the publication of draft minutes in accordance with standing order 12(e) and standing order 20(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

13. **CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS**

See also standing order 3(u).

- a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- c Unless he has been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if so required by the Council’s code of conduct. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
- d **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer** as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- e A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer and that decision is final.
- f A dispensation request shall confirm:

- i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- g Subject to standing orders 13(d) and (f), a dispensation request shall be considered [by the Proper Officer before the meeting or, if this is not possible, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- h A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
- i. **without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

- a Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11, report this to the Council.
- b Where the notification in standing order 14(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chairman of Council of this fact, and the Chairman shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined and the Council has agreed what action, if any, to take in accordance with standing order 14(d).
- c The Council may:
- i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
- d Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

15. **PROPER OFFICER**

a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.

b The Proper Officer shall:

i. **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,**

- **serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences or by email authenticated in such manner as the Proper Officer thinks fit, a signed summons confirming the time, place and the agenda (provided the councillor has consented to service by email), and**
- **Provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).**

See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and standing order 3(c) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a committee;

ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least six days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it;

iii. **convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**

iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**

v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**

vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;

vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;

viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;

ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);

x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;

xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980);

xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;

(see also standing order 23);

- xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chairman or in his absence the Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Council;
- xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and
- xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
(see also standing order 23).

16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

- a The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

- a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
 - ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
 - iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported andwhich includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.
- d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
 - i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and

payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and

- ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e. The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

- a. 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:
 - i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
 - ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
 - iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
 - iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payments; and
 - v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£25,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
- c. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £25,000 but less than the relevant thresholds in standing order 18(f) is subject to Regulations 109-114 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include a requirement on the Council to advertise the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website regardless of what other means it uses to advertise the opportunity unless it proposes to use an existing list of approved suppliers (framework agreement).**
- d. Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:
 - i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;

- ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
 - iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- e. Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- f. **A public contract regulated by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 with an estimated value in excess of £181,302 for a public service or supply contract or in excess of £4,551,413 for a public works contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU)) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 which include advertising the contract opportunity on the Contracts Finder website and in OJEU.**
- g. **A public contract in connection with the supply of gas, heat, electricity, drinking water, transport services, or postal services to the public; or the provision of a port or airport; or the exploration for or extraction of gas, oil or solid fuel with an estimated value in excess of £363,424 for a supply, services or design contract; or in excess of £4,551,413 for a works contract; or £820,370 for a social and other specific services contract (or other thresholds determined by the European Commission every two years and published in OJEU) shall comply with the relevant procurement procedures and other requirements in the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2016.**

19. **HANDLING STAFF MATTERS**

- a. A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council is subject to standing order 11.
- b. Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chairman or, if he is not available, the vice-chairman (if there is one) of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Council at its next meeting.
- c. The chairman of the Council or in his absence, the vice-chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of the Clerk, RFO and Assistant Clerk. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by the Council.

- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff (or other members of staff) shall contact the chairman or in his absence, the vice-chairman in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by a member of staff relates to the chairman or vice-chairman, this shall be communicated to another member of the Council, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.
- f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.
- g In accordance with standing order 11(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order 19(f).

20. **RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION**

See also standing order 21.

- a **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**
- b. *[If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000]* **The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**

OR

[If gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) exceeds £200,000]
The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.

21. **RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION**

(Below is not an exclusive list).

See also standing order 11.

- a The Council shall be the Data Protection Controller.
- b **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**
- c **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
- d **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**

- e **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**
- f **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

22. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA

- a Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

23. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS

See also standing orders 15(b)(xii) and (xvii).

- a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- b **Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

24. COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of the District and County Council OR Unitary Council representing the area of the Council.
- b Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to the District and County Council OR Unitary Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.

25. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES

- a. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:
 - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect;
or
 - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY

- a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.
- b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be

proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least four councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.

- c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
- d The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

Cannock Wood Parish Council

Councillor and Staff Training

Policy

1. Councillor and Staff Training

Councillor and Staff training policy:

This Councillor and Staff Training Policy outlines the training and development (or continuous professional development) that councillors and staff can expect to receive. As the first tier of local government, Parish Councils are uniquely placed to make a major contribution to localism. If Parish Councils are to play a significant part in democracy, it is essential that councillors and staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities. Engaging in learning, training and development is essential in gaining experience and enabling both councillors and staff to understand their role and contribute fully to the democratic process.

There is a wide range of training available to Parish Councils. Sector-specific training is delivered through a number of different mechanisms and organisations at both national and local (county) level.

Councillors

On expressing an interest in joining the council:

Prospective councillors should first contact the Clerk to the council confirming that they are interested in joining the Council or filling the vacancy. The Clerk will ask the prospective Councillor to answer some eligibility questions or will ask the candidate to complete an application form.

On joining the council by election or co-option:

All new councillors will be given an induction pack approved by the Parish Council. Copies of the below information will either be emailed to Councillors as required or Councillors will be directed to the documents on the Parish Council website.

1. Cannock Wood Parish Council's Code of Conduct for Parish Councillors
2. Cannock Wood Parish Council's current Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
3. A timetable of all the scheduled council meetings for the year to 31st March
4. The Good Councillor's Guide which is available from the clerk as a download

Background

Councillors are from a range of diverse backgrounds and bring different and valuable skills to the role. Despite this, few new councillors have extensive knowledge of the system of local government, how a council works or the full range of their roles and responsibilities. From their first council meeting councillors will be required to make important decisions on behalf of their communities and take responsibility for those decisions. Those decisions often involve significant use of public money, assets or natural resources. It is important that councillors have, or may quickly attain, a clear understanding of the system of local government, how the council works and the full range of their roles and responsibilities.

It is equally important that all councillors have ongoing opportunities to undertake appropriate skills development and training in areas needed to assist them to carry out their role effectively.

Staff

Training and Development

The council recognises that its employees are its principal asset. To ensure that the council can deliver the appropriate services to the community, it is essential that all employees are fully trained to perform their roles to the highest level. The responsibility for growth and development is shared between employees and the council. The council will support employees to develop the skills and experience needed for their roles and will work with employees to develop their abilities; and will identify time and budgets to enable this to happen.

Performance Management

The Council will undertake an appraisal of the clerk to review the past year's performance, identify training or development needs if required. The Clerk's appraisal will be undertaken by the Chair if required.

The clerk will be encouraged to discuss in an open and honest manner any ideas or issues they have concerning their employment.

Further training and refresher courses will be arranged where there is an identified need.

Training courses:

Many of the recommended training courses are run by the Staffordshire Parish Council Association (SPCA) . The Parish Council will pay for any training involved/required.

The following training is required for new councillors:

1. Essential Councillor Training – This must be completed within 6 months of attaining office or as soon as a course becomes available.
2. Any Councillor training, such as provided by SPCA for example on Finance or HR should be completed as required or agreed by the Council.

Further development:

1. Chairmanship Training
2. Refresher courses for all councillors where appropriate.

Other sources of support:

1. Working closely with another councillor acting as a mentor for at least the first three to six months of office where possible.
2. To complete Essential Councillor training within the first six months of office where possible.
3. Reading through council agendas and minutes of meetings and asking the clerk for an explanation or clarification of the various terms used.

4. Reading the various council sector publications that the council subscribes to for example SPCA .

Notification of Training Opportunities to Councillors

Any training or educational opportunities for councillors will be notified to councillors by email or via the SPCA bulletin from the Parish Clerk. If you wish to attend a certain training course, you must let the Clerk know as soon as possible for a place to be booked. If you are booked onto training that the Council are paying for, you must make sure that you attend that training.

Reviewed: September

2024

Next Review:

September 2026

Cannock Wood Parish Council

DOCUMENT RETENTION AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Approved at a meeting of the Parish Council held on 18th September 2025

INTRODUCTION

Cannock Wood Parish Council recognises that the efficient management of its records is necessary to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations and to contribute to the effective overall management of the Parish Council. This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited. It covers:

- Scope
- Responsibilities
- Relationships with existing policies
- Retention Schedule

SCOPE

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by the Parish Council in the course of carrying out its functions. Records are defined as all those documents which facilitate the business carried out by the Parish Council and which are thereafter retained to provide evidence of its transactions or activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically and this policy includes documents received by, created or held by a Parish Councillor (whether elected or co-opted) which relate to the business of the Parish Council.

The term “Record” refers to any document or record regardless of the media in which they are stored so refers to electronic records as well as printed documents.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Parish Council has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record management systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. The person with overall responsibility for this policy is the Clerk to the Parish Council.

Staff, Councillors and volunteers who hold records for which they are responsible have a duty to ensure those records are accurate and are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Parish Council’s records management guidelines.

RELATIONSHIP WITH EXISTING POLICIES

This policy has been drawn up within the context of:

- Freedom of Information Policy
- Data Protection policy/publication scheme
- Audit Regulations

And such other legislation or regulations which may from time to time apply to Parish Councils.

DOCUMENT RETENTION SCHEDULE

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 the Parish Council is required to maintain a retention schedule listing the record series which it creates in the course of its business. The retention

schedule lays down the length of time which the record needs to be retained and the action which should be taken when it is of no further administrative use.

Document	Minimum Retention Period	Reason
Minutes and Correspondence		
Minutes of Council meetings	Indefinite	Archive
Agendas	Indefinite	Archive
Correspondence and papers on important local issues	Indefinite	Archive
Routine correspondence	As long as useful	Management
Financial		
Receipt and payment accounts	Indefinite	Archive
Accounts/Financial Annual Return	Indefinite	Archive
Bank statements	Indefinite	Audit
Cheque book stubs	Indefinite	Audit
Budget control papers	Current year + 2 years	Audit
Quotations & tenders	6 years	Statute of Limitations
Paid invoices	6 years	VAT
Paid cheques	6 years	VAT
VAT records	6 years	VAT
Payroll records	5 years	Audit
Insurance		
Certificate of Employers Liability	50 years	Legislation
Certificate of Public Liability	21 years	Legislation
Insurance Claim records	7 years after all obligations are concluded	Legislation

Policy renewal records & correspondence	While valid	Management
Members		
Register of Interests	18 months after individual ceases to be a Member	Management
Other		
Complaints	5 years after closure of case	Management
Personnel/Staff Matters		
Application forms (unsuccessful candidates)	6 months	Management
Disciplinary Records	Retain for period of employment	Management
Personnel Files	6 years after ceasing employment	Management
Planning		
Applications	5 year	Management
Applications on which Parish Council has commented	5 years	Management

Reviewed and Approved

Signed
Chairman