

GREAT WYRLEY PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS



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Version: 2026

**Great Wyrley Parish Council
Great Wyrley Community Centre
Landywood Lane
Great Wyrley
WS6 6JX**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 These Standing Orders regulate the proceedings and business of Great Wyrley Parish Council ("the Council").

1.2 They shall be read in conjunction with:

- applicable legislation and regulations;
- the Council's Financial Regulations;
- the Council's Code of Conduct;
- the Council's Scheme of Delegation;
- the Council's Risk Management Policy;
- the Council's Complaints Procedure;
- the Council's policies relating to data protection, information governance and freedom of information; and
- any other policies adopted by the Council from time to time.

1.3 Where there is any conflict between these Standing Orders and legislation, legislation shall prevail.

1.4 Nothing in these Standing Orders shall be interpreted as giving the Council, a committee, a working party, the Chairman, a councillor or an officer a power that the Council does not possess in law.

1.5 These Standing Orders shall be reviewed when necessary and, as a minimum, following significant changes in legislation or recognised national guidance affecting parish councils.

2. MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

2.1 The Council shall meet at least such number of times in each year as is required by law and shall normally meet monthly, except in August or where the Council has resolved otherwise.

2.2 Ordinary meetings shall normally be held at Great Wyrley Community Centre or at another place determined by the Council.

2.3 The dates, times and places of ordinary meetings shall normally be approved by the Council in advance.

2.4 The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council shall be held in accordance with statutory requirements.

2.5 A meeting may be called in accordance with the statutory provisions applicable to parish councils.

2.6 The Clerk shall give the required notice of meetings and shall publish the agenda in accordance with statutory requirements.

2.7 Meetings may only be conducted by remote or hybrid means where the law permits such arrangements.

3. ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

3.1 The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council shall be held in accordance with statutory requirements.

3.2 The first business shall include:

- a) electing the Chairman of the Council;
- b) receiving the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office, where required;
- c) electing a Vice-Chairman;
- d) appointing committees and working parties, where required;
- e) appointing representatives to outside bodies;
- f) reviewing delegated powers;
- g) reviewing the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations where appropriate; and
- h) considering such other business as is required by law or determined by the Council.

3.3 The Chairman shall preside over the Annual Meeting once elected, subject to the applicable statutory provisions.

4. CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING

4.1 The Chairman of the Council shall preside at meetings of the Council when present.

4.2 If the Chairman is absent, the Vice-Chairman shall preside.

4.3 If neither the Chairman nor Vice-Chairman is present, the councillors present shall elect a councillor to preside over the meeting.

4.4 The person presiding over a meeting shall have the powers and duties of the Chairman in relation to the conduct of that meeting.

4.5 The Chairman shall remain impartial in applying these Standing Orders and shall ensure that all councillors have a reasonable opportunity to participate in debate.

5. PROPER OFFICER

5.1 The Proper Officer of the Council shall be the Parish Clerk unless the Council has formally appointed another person to undertake that role.

5.2 The Proper Officer shall undertake the functions assigned by law to the Proper Officer of the Council, including, where applicable:

- a) receiving declarations of acceptance of office;
- b) receiving notices disclosing interests;
- c) receiving and retaining documents on behalf of the Council;
- d) signing notices and other documents on behalf of the Council where authorised;
- e) issuing notices and summonses for meetings;
- f) maintaining the Council's official records; and
- g) carrying out such other statutory functions as are assigned to the Proper Officer.

5.3 The Proper Officer shall act in accordance with decisions properly made by the Council and shall not exercise powers reserved to the Council unless specifically authorised to do so.

6. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

6.1 The Responsible Financial Officer ("RFO") shall be appointed by the Council.

6.2 The RFO shall be responsible for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs in accordance with legislation, proper practices and the Council's Financial Regulations.

6.3 The RFO shall maintain appropriate accounting records and shall prepare financial information and statutory accounts and returns as required.

6.4 The RFO shall advise the Council where a proposed decision may have financial, legal, regulatory or risk implications.

7. QUORUM

7.1 A quorum shall be **five councillors**.

7.2 No business shall be transacted at a meeting unless a quorum is present.

7.3 If a quorum is not present when a meeting is due to commence, the meeting shall be adjourned.

7.4 If the number of councillors present falls below the quorum during a meeting, the Chairman shall suspend or adjourn the meeting and no further substantive business shall be transacted.

7.5 Business not transacted because of an insufficient quorum may be placed before a subsequent meeting.

7.6 Where legislation requires a different quorum for a particular matter, the statutory requirement shall apply.

8. VOTING

8.1 Unless legislation requires otherwise, a question shall be decided by a majority of councillors present and voting.

8.2 Voting shall normally be by show of hands.

8.3 The Chairman may ask councillors to vote verbally where appropriate.

8.4 The Council may use a recorded vote where this is permitted by law and requested by a councillor.

8.5 Where a recorded vote is taken, the minutes shall record the names of councillors voting for and against the motion and those abstaining.

8.6 A councillor may abstain from voting.

8.7 The Chairman may vote on a matter in the same way as any other councillor.

8.8 Where there is an equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a casting vote where permitted by law.

8.9 Nothing in these Standing Orders shall require a councillor to vote where legislation provides otherwise.

9. ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

9.1 Where the Council is required to elect a person to an office, the election shall be conducted in accordance with applicable law.

9.2 Unless legislation provides otherwise, where there are more than two candidates and no candidate obtains a majority of votes, the candidate with the fewest votes shall be removed from the contest and a further vote shall be held.

9.3 The process shall continue until a candidate receives the required majority.

9.4 The Council may appoint councillors to committees, working parties and outside bodies by resolution.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

10.1 Every councillor shall comply with:

- a) the Council's adopted Code of Conduct;
- b) the Localism Act 2011 and regulations made under it;
- c) the requirements concerning Disclosable Pecuniary Interests ("DPIs"); and
- d) any other applicable legal requirements concerning interests.

10.2 A councillor shall declare any interest required by law or by the Council's Code of Conduct as soon as the matter arises.

10.3 Where a councillor has a DPI in a matter under consideration, the councillor shall comply with the statutory requirements, including withdrawing from participation and voting where required, unless a lawful dispensation applies.

10.4 Councillors shall also declare other interests where required by the Council's Code of Conduct.

10.5 The Clerk shall record declarations of interest in the minutes as required.

10.6 The Council shall maintain and publish registers of interests in accordance with applicable legislation and arrangements operated by the Council and South Staffordshire Council.

10.7 Where a councillor is uncertain whether an interest must be declared, the councillor should seek advice from the Clerk and/or the Monitoring Officer of South Staffordshire Council before participating in the matter.

11. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

11.1 The Council shall provide a public participation period of **15 minutes in total** at the commencement of each ordinary Council meeting, unless the Council determines otherwise.

11.2 Members of the public may address the Council on matters relevant to the parish.

11.3 Individual speakers should normally be limited to three minutes unless the Chairman allows additional time.

11.4 The Chairman may vary the allocation of time between speakers in order to ensure that the session is fair and manageable.

11.5 Questions should be directed through the Chairman.

11.6 Questions requiring detailed information or a definitive response should, where reasonably practicable, be submitted in writing to the Clerk at least seven days before the meeting.

11.7 A question submitted later may be answered at the meeting where the information is readily available, or may be referred to a subsequent meeting.

11.8 The public participation period does not form part of the Council's formal decision-making debate unless a matter is subsequently included as an agenda item.

11.9 Members of the public shall not vote on Council business.

11.10 The Chairman may require a person to stop speaking if their contribution is:

- irrelevant to the business of the Council;
- defamatory;
- threatening or abusive;
- repetitious;
- disruptive; or
- otherwise contrary to the proper conduct of the meeting.

11.11 The Chairman may extend the public participation period by resolution of the Council where this is considered appropriate.

11.12 Nothing in this Standing Order limits any statutory right of a member of the public to attend, report, film, photograph, record or otherwise observe a meeting.

12. ORDER OF BUSINESS

12.1 Unless the Council decides otherwise for reasons of urgency, the business of an ordinary meeting shall normally be conducted in the following order:

- a) election of a Chairman of the meeting where necessary;
- b) apologies for absence;
- c) declarations of interest;
- d) public participation;
- e) approval of the minutes of the previous meeting;
- f) matters arising from the minutes;
- g) Clerk/RFO report;
- h) County Councillor's report;

- i) District Councillors' reports;
- j) Parish Councillors' reports;
- k) reports from committees and working parties;
- l) reports from outside bodies;
- m) planning applications and planning matters;
- n) financial matters and payments;
- o) correspondence and communications requiring Council consideration;
- p) motions and recommendations;
- q) matters for information; and
- r) any other business properly placed on the agenda.

12.2 The Council may vary the order of business by resolution.

12.3 A motion to vary the order of business shall be decided without debate unless the Chairman considers that brief discussion is necessary to clarify the proposal.

13. AGENDAS AND BUSINESS

13.1 No substantive business shall be transacted unless it is included on the agenda or is otherwise permitted by law.

13.2 A councillor wishing to place a substantive motion before the Council shall normally submit it in writing to the Clerk at least seven clear days before the meeting.

13.3 The Clerk may seek clarification from the proposer where a proposed motion is unclear, outside the Council's powers or potentially unlawful.

13.4 The Chairman may rule that a proposed motion is out of order where it is outside the Council's powers or contrary to law.

13.5 Urgent business may only be considered where permitted by law.

13.6 The reasons for considering urgent business shall be recorded in the minutes.

14. MINUTES

14.1 The minutes of a meeting shall be prepared by the Clerk.

14.2 Minutes shall record decisions made by the Council and shall not normally record detailed individual speeches.

14.3 Minutes shall accurately record:

- the date, time and place of the meeting;
- those present;
- apologies;
- declarations of interest;
- decisions and resolutions;
- voting results where appropriate;
- relevant procedural matters; and
- such other information as legislation requires.

14.4 Minutes shall be submitted to the next appropriate meeting for approval.

14.5 The Chairman of the meeting shall sign the approved minutes as a correct record.

14.6 No discussion shall take place on the minutes except as to their accuracy.

14.7 Corrections shall be agreed by resolution and recorded in the minutes.

14.8 Draft minutes shall be published within the timescales required by applicable transparency legislation.

15. QUESTIONS

15.1 A councillor may ask the Chairman a question concerning the business of the Council.

15.2 Questions shall be relevant to Council business.

15.3 Questions may be answered orally or referred to the Clerk or another appropriate person for a written response.

15.4 The Chairman may rule a question out of order if it is defamatory, irrelevant, repetitive or otherwise inappropriate.

16. MOTIONS

16.1 A motion shall be proposed and, unless the Council's rules provide otherwise, seconded before it is debated.

16.2 A motion shall relate to a matter within the Council's powers or functions or which lawfully concerns the Council's area.

16.3 A motion shall be submitted in writing where required by the Clerk or Chairman.

16.4 A councillor proposing a motion may speak in support of it.

16.5 A councillor may withdraw a motion with the consent of the Council before it has been put to a vote.

16.6 A motion may be amended in accordance with these Standing Orders.

16.7 A motion which would negate the substance of the original motion shall not be accepted as an amendment.

17. AMENDMENTS

17.1 An amendment shall:

- a) leave out words;
- b) leave out words and insert or add other words; or
- c) insert or add words.

17.2 An amendment shall be relevant to the original motion.

17.3 An amendment shall not have the effect of negating the original motion.

17.4 Only one amendment shall normally be considered at a time.

17.5 Once an amendment has been disposed of, a further amendment may be considered.

17.6 If an amendment is carried, the amended motion becomes the substantive motion to be decided.

18. RULES OF DEBATE

18.1 Councillors shall address the Chairman when speaking.

18.2 Councillors shall speak only when called upon by the Chairman.

18.3 Councillors shall address the matter under discussion and shall not make personal or offensive remarks.

18.4 No councillor shall speak for more than **five minutes** on any one motion unless the Council agrees otherwise.

18.5 A councillor may speak more than once on the same matter only:

- a) with the permission of the Chairman;
- b) to propose or speak to an amendment;

- c) on a point of order;
- d) by way of personal explanation; or
- e) where otherwise permitted by these Standing Orders.

18.6 The Chairman may invite a councillor to conclude their contribution where it has become repetitious or irrelevant.

18.7 Whenever the Chairman stands, councillors shall stop speaking and listen to the Chairman.

18.8 The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order shall not be debated.

19. CLOSURE OF DEBATE

19.1 A councillor may move, without debate:

- a) "that the question be now put";
- b) "that the debate be adjourned"; or
- c) "that the Council do now adjourn".

19.2 A closure motion must be seconded.

19.3 The Chairman shall decide whether the matter has been sufficiently debated before putting a closure motion to the vote.

19.4 If the motion "that the question be now put" is carried, the Chairman shall allow the proposer of the substantive motion any right of reply before the vote is taken.

20. DISORDERLY CONDUCT

20.1 No councillor shall:

- a) persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman;
- b) wilfully obstruct the business of the Council;
- c) behave in an abusive, threatening, offensive or disorderly manner; or
- d) otherwise disrupt the proper conduct of the meeting.

20.2 Where the Chairman considers that a councillor is behaving improperly, the Chairman may issue a warning.

20.3 If the behaviour continues, a councillor may move that the councillor named:

a) be no longer heard; or

b) leave the meeting.

20.4 Such a motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without further debate.

20.5 If necessary, the Chairman may adjourn or suspend the meeting to restore order.

20.6 The Council's adopted Code of Conduct and any applicable member conduct procedures shall continue to apply.

21. PUBLIC AND PRESS

21.1 Subject to lawful exclusion, meetings of the Council shall be open to members of the public and representatives of the press.

21.2 Members of the public and press may exercise their lawful rights to:

- attend;
- report;
- film;
- photograph;
- audio-record; and
- use other means to record or communicate proceedings.

21.3 Such activities shall not be carried out in a manner which disrupts the meeting.

21.4 Where lawful grounds exist for excluding the public and press, the Council may resolve to exclude them.

21.5 The resolution shall identify the relevant legal basis and the general nature of the confidential or exempt business.

21.6 Where the public and press are excluded, the Clerk shall ensure that confidential papers are appropriately handled.

22. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

22.1 The public and press may be excluded from all or part of a meeting where the Council considers that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business or for another lawful reason.

22.2 Any resolution to exclude the public and press shall specify the general nature of the business and the legal basis for exclusion where appropriate.

22.3 The Council shall only exclude the public and press where it has lawful authority to do so.

22.4 Confidential information shall not be disclosed improperly.

22.5 Nothing in these Standing Orders prevents a councillor or officer from making a disclosure required or protected by law.

23. EMPLOYEES

23.1 Where business relating to the appointment, conduct, performance, remuneration, dismissal or other employment matter concerning an individual employee is considered, the Council shall comply with applicable employment law and its adopted employment policies.

23.2 Where appropriate, the Council may exclude the public and press from consideration of confidential employment matters.

23.3 Individual employee matters shall not be discussed in public unless the Council considers that disclosure is lawful and appropriate.

23.4 The Clerk/RFO shall not participate in a decision concerning their own employment where there is a conflict of interest.

23.5 Employment decisions shall be made by the Council or by an authorised committee/officer in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

24. COMMITTEES

24.1 The Council may establish committees where permitted by law.

24.2 The Council shall determine the membership, terms of reference and delegated authority of each committee.

24.3 A committee shall not exercise any power which has not been formally delegated to it.

24.4 The Council shall review committee arrangements at least annually.

25. WORKING PARTIES

25.1 The Council may establish working parties to investigate, research or develop proposals for consideration by the Council.

25.2 A working party shall operate within written terms of reference approved by the Council.

25.3 Working parties shall normally be advisory and shall not have delegated decision-making powers unless the Council has expressly delegated such powers in accordance with law.

25.4 A working party may include persons who are not councillors where the Council considers this appropriate.

25.5 Non-councillors appointed to a working party shall not have voting rights on Council decisions.

25.6 Working parties shall report their recommendations to the Council.

25.7 Working parties shall not commit expenditure or enter into contracts on behalf of the Council unless expressly authorised.

26. OUTSIDE BODIES

26.1 The Council may appoint councillors or other authorised representatives to represent the Council on outside bodies.

26.2 Representatives shall report significant matters to the Council.

26.3 Representatives shall not commit the Council to expenditure, contracts or other obligations unless authorised to do so.

27. FINANCE AND EXPENDITURE

27.1 The Council shall maintain and comply with Financial Regulations adopted by resolution.

27.2 Expenditure shall only be incurred:

- a) for a lawful Council purpose;
- b) within the approved budget or under properly authorised delegated powers; and
- c) in accordance with the Financial Regulations and procurement requirements.

27.3 The Council shall approve payments in accordance with its Financial Regulations.

27.4 Payments shall be authorised by persons with appropriate delegated authority.

27.5 The Council shall maintain appropriate separation of duties and controls over financial transactions.

27.6 No councillor shall authorise payment to themselves.

27.7 Any councillor with an interest in a financial transaction shall comply with the Code of Conduct and relevant legislation.

28. EMERGENCY EXPENDITURE AND DELEGATED ACTION

28.1 The Clerk/RFO may take urgent action where:

- a) immediate action is reasonably necessary to protect Council property, employees, the public or the Council's interests; and
- b) delaying the action until the next Council meeting would create an unacceptable risk or prejudice.

28.2 Emergency expenditure shall be limited to what is reasonably necessary to address the emergency.

28.3 Where practicable, the Clerk/RFO shall consult the Chairman or Vice-Chairman before taking such action.

28.4 Where the Clerk/RFO and both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are unavailable, urgent action may be authorised by **three councillors**, provided that:

- a) the action is genuinely urgent;
- b) the action is within the Council's lawful powers;
- c) the expenditure is reasonable and proportionate;
- d) the decision is recorded in writing; and
- e) the decision is reported to the next Council meeting.

28.5 Emergency expenditure shall be separately identified in the next schedule of payments presented to the Council.

28.6 This Standing Order does not authorise expenditure that would otherwise require a statutory approval, consent or other legal process.

29. BUDGET AND PRECEPT

29.1 The Council shall prepare and approve an annual budget before setting its precept.

29.2 The budget shall be based on realistic estimates of income and expenditure and shall take account of:

- existing commitments;
- expected expenditure;
- reserves;

- planned projects;
- staff costs;
- maintenance requirements;
- risks and contingencies; and
- anticipated income.

29.3 The Council shall determine the precept in accordance with statutory requirements.

29.4 The RFO shall provide appropriate financial information to enable the Council to make an informed decision.

29.5 The Council shall regularly monitor actual income and expenditure against the approved budget.

30. PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS

30.1 The Council shall comply with all procurement legislation applicable to it, including the Procurement Act 2023 and associated regulations and guidance where applicable.

30.2 The Council shall also comply with its Financial Regulations and any procurement procedures approved by the Council.

30.3 Procurement decisions shall be made in accordance with the principles of:

- value for money;
- fairness;
- transparency;
- proportionality;
- integrity;
- proper competition where appropriate; and
- avoidance of conflicts of interest.

30.4 The Council shall determine the appropriate procurement procedure having regard to:

- a) the estimated total contract value, including applicable extensions and options;
- b) the nature and duration of the contract;
- c) whether the contract is subject to the Procurement Act 2023 or another statutory regime;
- d) whether the contract is exempt;
- e) the Council's Financial Regulations; and
- f) any relevant Government guidance.

30.5 The Council shall not artificially divide a procurement to avoid applicable procurement or financial requirements.

30.6 Where quotations or tenders are required under the Council's Financial Regulations, the required number shall be obtained unless a lawful exception applies and the reason is recorded.

30.7 Where a formal procurement procedure is required by law, the Council shall use the appropriate statutory process and publication arrangements.

30.8 The Council shall comply with applicable requirements concerning the Central Digital Platform and publication of notices and contract information.

30.9 A contract shall not be awarded by a councillor or officer who has a relevant conflict of interest.

30.10 All contracts shall be properly documented.

30.11 The Council shall maintain appropriate records of procurement decisions, quotations, tenders, evaluation and award.

30.12 The Council shall publish procurement information where required by law, the Transparency Code or the Council's own publication arrangements.

31. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

31.1 The officer or person responsible for a contract shall monitor its performance.

31.2 Material problems with a contract shall be reported to the Council or the appropriate delegated body.

31.3 Contract variations shall only be made where authorised and lawful.

31.4 Where the Council is required to publish contract performance information, the responsible officer shall ensure that the required information is provided.

31.5 The Council shall maintain appropriate records of contracts and contract performance.

32. PAYMENTS

32.1 A schedule of payments shall normally be presented to each ordinary Council meeting for approval.

32.2 Payment schedules shall identify sufficient information to enable councillors to understand the nature and amount of each payment.

32.3 Payments shall be made in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

32.4 Bank payments shall be subject to appropriate dual-authorisation and other financial controls.

32.5 Cheques, where used, shall be signed by authorised signatories in accordance with the Council's banking mandate.

32.6 No councillor shall approve a payment where doing so would create a conflict of interest.

33. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

33.1 The Council shall only use its common seal where a seal is required or appropriate.

33.2 The sealing of a document shall be authorised by resolution unless authority has lawfully been delegated.

33.3 Where a document is required to be sealed, it shall be sealed in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

33.4 The persons authorised to attest the seal shall be determined by the Council.

34. INFORMATION, DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

34.1 Council records shall be maintained securely and in accordance with applicable law and the Council's policies.

34.2 Councillors may inspect Council documents where they are entitled to do so for the proper discharge of their duties.

34.3 Access to personal, commercially sensitive or confidential information shall be restricted where required by law.

34.4 Nothing in these Standing Orders overrides:

- the Freedom of Information Act 2000;
- the UK General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018;
- the Environmental Information Regulations 2004;
- copyright law;
- confidentiality obligations; or
- any other applicable information law.

34.5 Requests for information shall be dealt with in accordance with the Council's adopted information governance procedures.

35. TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLICATION

35.1 The Council shall publish information required by law, including applicable requirements under the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.

35.2 The Council shall publish agendas, minutes and other information within the timescales required by applicable legislation.

35.3 Where the Council's annual turnover is within the scope of the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities, the Council shall comply with the Code.

35.4 Where the Council is outside the scope of that Code, it shall nevertheless comply with other applicable transparency and publication requirements.

35.5 The Council shall maintain an accessible website or other appropriate publication arrangements.

35.6 Confidential or legally protected information shall not be published.

36. COMMUNICATIONS

36.1 Official communications on behalf of the Council shall normally be issued by the Clerk or another person authorised by the Council.

36.2 Individual councillors shall not represent personal views as Council policy.

36.3 The Chairman may speak publicly on behalf of the Council where authorised by the Council or where communicating an agreed Council position.

36.4 Councillors shall make clear when they are expressing a personal view rather than a Council decision.

36.5 Social media and digital communications shall be used in accordance with the Council's policies and Code of Conduct.

37. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

37.1 The Council shall consider planning applications and consultations referred to it by the relevant planning authority.

37.2 Planning recommendations shall be made by resolution.

37.3 Councillors shall declare relevant interests in planning matters.

37.4 Councillors shall avoid predetermining applications where they are required to approach the matter with an open mind.

37.5 The Council shall distinguish between:

- material planning considerations;
- matters outside planning control; and
- personal or other interests.

37.6 Planning comments shall be submitted to the relevant planning authority within the applicable consultation period where reasonably practicable.

38. REPORTS FROM DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

38.1 The Council shall invite the relevant District and County Councillors to attend meetings where appropriate.

38.2 The Clerk shall provide meeting notices and agendas in accordance with applicable arrangements.

38.3 Reports from District and County Councillors shall normally be received during the appropriate agenda item.

38.4 The presence of a District or County Councillor does not confer voting rights on that person unless they are also a serving parish councillor.

39. URGENT BUSINESS

39.1 Urgent business shall only be considered where the law permits it.

39.2 The Chairman shall explain why the matter is urgent.

39.3 The reason for urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

39.4 Where a matter is not legally capable of being decided at the meeting because it was not properly included on the agenda, the Council shall not make a substantive decision on it.

40. ATTENDANCE OF MEMBERS

40.1 Councillors should notify the Clerk as soon as reasonably practicable if they are unable to attend a meeting.

40.2 Apologies for absence shall be submitted to the Clerk and shall be considered by the Council.

40.3 The Council shall record apologies and whether they are accepted.

40.4 Councillors shall comply with statutory requirements concerning attendance and disqualification.

41. CO-OPTION

41.1 Where a casual vacancy is to be filled by co-option, the Council shall follow the statutory procedure.

41.2 The Council shall determine the process for inviting applications and considering candidates.

41.3 Candidates shall be assessed fairly and consistently.

41.4 A person shall not be co-opted where they are legally disqualified from being a councillor.

41.5 The Council shall record the decision to co-opt a councillor.

42. VACANCIES

42.1 When a councillor's office becomes vacant, the Clerk shall follow the statutory procedure for notifying the appropriate authority and electors.

42.2 Where a vacancy may be filled by co-option, the Council shall comply with the relevant statutory requirements.

43. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES

43.1 The Council shall determine membership of committees and working parties annually or when circumstances require.

43.2 The Council may alter committee or working party membership by resolution.

43.3 A councillor appointed to an outside body shall report significant matters back to the Council.

44. COUNCILLOR CONDUCT

44.1 Councillors shall comply with the Council's adopted Code of Conduct.

44.2 Councillors shall act in accordance with the principles of public life, including selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

44.3 Councillors shall treat officers, councillors, members of the public and others with respect.

44.4 Councillors shall not use their position improperly for personal advantage or disadvantage.

44.5 Complaints concerning councillor conduct shall be dealt with through the appropriate standards process rather than through debate at a Council meeting.

45. OFFICERS AND COUNCILLORS

45.1 Councillors shall respect the proper role of the Clerk and other Council employees.

45.2 Councillors shall not individually instruct employees to undertake work unless authorised under the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

45.3 The Clerk shall implement lawful decisions of the Council.

45.4 Councillors shall not interfere improperly in the employment relationship between the Council and its employees.

45.5 The Council shall provide appropriate support, training and resources for its officers where reasonably practicable.

46. MEMBERS' ACCESS TO INFORMATION

46.1 A councillor shall be entitled to access Council information where reasonably necessary for the proper discharge of their duties and where permitted by law.

46.2 Information shall not be used for an improper purpose.

46.3 Confidential information shall not be disclosed improperly.

46.4 The Clerk may refuse access to information where disclosure would be unlawful, disproportionate or contrary to an applicable legal restriction.

46.5 Where there is uncertainty about access to information, advice should be obtained from the Clerk and, where appropriate, the Council's legal adviser or relevant authority.

47. PETITIONS AND WRITTEN REPRESENTATIONS

47.1 Written representations received by the Council shall be considered by the Clerk and, where appropriate, placed before the Council.

47.2 The Clerk may acknowledge correspondence and provide factual information without seeking a Council resolution.

47.3 Matters requiring a Council decision shall be placed on a future agenda where appropriate.

47.4 The Council shall not be required to debate correspondence which is abusive, defamatory, repetitive or otherwise inappropriate.

48. RECORDING OF DECISIONS

48.1 The Clerk shall maintain an official record of Council decisions.

48.2 Decisions shall identify the matter considered and the resolution reached.

48.3 Where a vote is formally recorded, the minutes shall identify the voting result in accordance with these Standing Orders.

48.4 Where a councillor has declared an interest and withdraws from consideration, this shall be recorded where appropriate.

49. RECONSIDERATION OF PREVIOUS DECISIONS

49.1 The Council may reconsider a previous decision where:

- a) the matter is lawfully placed before the Council;
- b) circumstances have materially changed;
- c) new information has become available; or
- d) reconsideration is otherwise lawful and appropriate.

49.2 Nothing in these Standing Orders shall prevent the Council from exercising a statutory power or complying with a statutory requirement.

49.3 Where a decision is to be rescinded or materially altered, the matter shall be clearly identified on the agenda.

50. PUBLIC RIGHTS

50.1 Nothing in these Standing Orders shall remove or restrict statutory rights of local government electors or members of the public.

50.2 The Council shall comply with applicable rights concerning:

- inspection of documents;
 - attendance at meetings;
 - reporting of meetings;
 - exercise of public rights relating to the Council's accounts;
 - access to information; and
 - participation in the democratic process.
-

51. COUNCIL ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT

51.1 The Council shall comply with all applicable requirements relating to accounting, audit and financial reporting.

51.2 The RFO shall prepare the annual accounting statements and other statutory financial information required.

51.3 The Council shall approve the relevant annual governance and accounting documents within the statutory deadlines.

51.4 The Council shall cooperate with its appointed external auditor and internal auditor.

51.5 The Council shall provide documents and information required for audit.

51.6 The Council shall comply with the statutory public rights period relating to its accounts.

52. INTERNAL CONTROL

52.1 The Council shall maintain appropriate systems of internal control.

52.2 Internal controls shall include, where appropriate:

- regular bank reconciliations;
- review of financial reports;
- segregation of duties;
- review of payments;
- review of income;
- asset controls;
- insurance;
- risk management;
- procurement controls; and
- internal audit.

52.3 The Council shall review its internal controls regularly.

53. RISK MANAGEMENT

53.1 The Council shall maintain a risk management process.

53.2 Significant risks shall be identified, assessed and managed.

53.3 The Council shall maintain appropriate insurance.

53.4 The Council shall review its risk register periodically.

53.5 Officers and councillors shall report significant risks to the Clerk or Chairman.

54. HEALTH AND SAFETY

54.1 The Council shall maintain appropriate health and safety arrangements for its employees, premises, services and activities.

54.2 Councillors shall comply with reasonable health and safety requirements when acting on behalf of the Council.

54.3 Accidents and significant incidents shall be reported in accordance with the Council's procedures.

55. MEETING LENGTH

55.1 Ordinary meetings of the Council shall normally conclude by **9:30 pm**.

55.2 Where business remains outstanding at 9:30 pm, the Chairman may propose an extension of up to **15 minutes**.

55.3 If the Council has not completed its business by 9:45 pm, the remaining business shall normally be deferred to a subsequent meeting.

55.4 The Chairman may bring forward the conclusion of a meeting where there is insufficient time to complete the remaining business properly.

55.5 Nothing in this Standing Order authorises the Council to disregard statutory deadlines.

56. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

56.1 Subject to paragraph 56.2, the Council may suspend a Standing Order for a particular item of business by resolution.

56.2 A Standing Order may not be suspended where doing so would:

- a) contravene legislation;
- b) remove a statutory right;
- c) invalidate the meeting or decision;
- d) circumvent procurement law;
- e) undermine financial controls required by law; or
- f) otherwise result in unlawful Council action.

56.3 The reason for suspending a Standing Order shall be recorded in the minutes.

56.4 A suspension shall apply only to the specific business for which it was agreed.

57. ALTERATION OF STANDING ORDERS

57.1 These Standing Orders may be amended by resolution of the Council.

57.2 A proposed permanent amendment should normally be included on the agenda and circulated to councillors before the meeting.

57.3 Amendments shall take effect from the date specified by the Council.

57.4 The Council shall review these Standing Orders whenever there is a significant change in relevant legislation or national guidance.

58. PROVISION OF STANDING ORDERS TO COUNCILLORS

58.1 A copy of these Standing Orders shall be provided to each councillor electronically or in printed form.

58.2 The current version shall be made available on the Council's website where appropriate.

58.3 Councillors shall be expected to familiarise themselves with these Standing Orders and the Council's related policies.

59. INTERPRETATION

59.1 In these Standing Orders:

"Chairman" means the person elected Chairman of Great Wyrley Parish Council and includes the person presiding over a particular meeting.

"Council" means Great Wyrley Parish Council.

"Councillor" means a member of Great Wyrley Parish Council.

"Clerk" means the Parish Clerk and Proper Officer unless otherwise stated.

"RFO" means the Responsible Financial Officer.

"Meeting" means a meeting of the Parish Council or a committee where the context requires.

"Working Party" means a body established by the Council to investigate or consider matters and report recommendations to the Council.

"DPI" means a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as defined by applicable legislation.

59.2 Words importing the singular include the plural and vice versa.

59.3 References to legislation include amendments, replacements and subordinate legislation made under it.

60. ADOPTION

These Standing Orders were adopted by resolution of Great Wyrley Parish Council at a meeting held on:

Date: _____

Minute reference: _____

Chairman: _____

Clerk: _____

Review date: _____

RELATED DOCUMENTS

These Standing Orders should be read alongside the Council's:

1. Financial Regulations;
2. Code of Conduct;
3. Scheme of Delegation;
4. Risk Management Policy;
5. Complaints Procedure;
6. Freedom of Information Policy;
7. Data Protection/Privacy Policy;
8. Publication Scheme;
9. Asset Register;
10. Internal Control arrangements;
11. Employment/HR policies;
12. Procurement procedures; and
13. Emergency/Business Continuity arrangements.

IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ADOPTION

Before adoption, the Council should confirm that:

- the current Financial Regulations are consistent with these Standing Orders;

- the Council's Code of Conduct and register of interests arrangements are current;
- the Council's procurement procedures comply with the Procurement Act 2023 and current regulations;
- the Scheme of Delegation correctly identifies who may exercise delegated powers;
- the bank mandate and payment authorisation arrangements are consistent with the Financial Regulations;
- the Council's publication and transparency arrangements are current; and
- the Clerk/RFO and Chairman have reviewed the emergency expenditure provisions.

The Council should obtain advice from its Monitoring Officer or suitably qualified legal adviser where a particular provision is uncertain or where legislation changes.