Baston Parish Council Standing Orders

**Based upon the NALC Model Orders July 2018, modified by this Council to support the new empowerment enshrined in the Coronavirus Act 2020 and associated 2020 Regulations.**

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These standing orders are the written rules of Baston Parish Council and are essential to regulate the proceedings of a meeting and the way the council conducts its general business. These standing orders do not include model financial regulations. Financial regulations are standing orders to regulate and control the financial affairs and accounting procedures of a local council are covered in separate documents.

# RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

* 1. All remarks shall be addressed to the Chairman.
  2. No discussion shall take place on the minutes of previous meetings except upon their accuracy. Corrections, changes and additions to the minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialed by the Chairman.
  3. 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.
  4. A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
  5. A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
  6. If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
  7. An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
  8. 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.
  9. 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.
  10. 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.
  11. 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.
  12. Subject to standing order 1(m), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
  13. 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.
  14. A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
  15. The mover of a resolution shall have the right of reply, not exceeding 1 minute.
  16. The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.
  17. 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.
  18. Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
      1. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
      2. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
      3. to make a point of order;
      4. to give a personal explanation; or
      5. to exercise a right of reply.
  19. 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.
  20. A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
  21. When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
      1. to amend the motion;
      2. to proceed to the next business;
      3. to adjourn the debate;
      4. to put the motion to a vote;
      5. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
      6. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
      7. to exclude the public and press;
      8. to adjourn the meeting; or
      9. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
  22. 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.
  23. 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 5 minutes without the consent of the chairman of the meeting.

# DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

* 1. 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.
  2. Mobile telephones and other communication devises must be switched off at the start of the meeting and may not be used except in the case of emergency or upon consent of the Chairman.
  3. 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.
  4. 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.

# MEETINGS GENERALLY

* 1. **Meetings shall take place at a time and date as the Council shall determine.**

LAPCP Regulations 2020 Part 2 Reg 4(a)

* 1. **Meetings shall not take place in premises, which at the time of the meeting are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other premises are available free of charge or at reasonable cost.**
  2. **Council may alter the frequency, move or cancel such meetings.**LAPCP Regulations 2020 Part 2 Reg 4(a)
  3. **A meeting is not limited to a meeting of persons all of whom, or any of whom, are present in the same place and any reference to a ‘place’ where a meeting is held, or to be held, includes reference to more than one place including electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers.**LAPCP Regulations 2020 Part 2 Reg 5 (1)
  4. **Members (including members of the public) in remote attendance attends the meeting at any time if all of the conditions in this subsection are satisfied:**
     1. To hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, the other members in attendance;
     2. To hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, any members of the public entitled to attend the meeting in order to exercise a right to speak at the meeting;
     3. To be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by any other members of the public attending the meeting.
  5. **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 or public thanksgiving or mourning.**
  6. **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.**
  7. **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.**
  8. **Member and public access to documents and remote access of public and press to a local authority meeting to enable them to attend or participate in that meeting by remote means.**LAPCP Regulations 2020 Part 2 Reg 6(b)(c)
  9. **A meeting being ‘open to the public’ include access to the meeting through remote means and where a meeting is accessible to the public through such remote means the meeting is open to the public whether or not members of the public are able to attend the meeting in person;**LAPCP Regulations 2020 Part 2 Reg 13(a)
  10. **Being ‘present’ at a meeting include access through remote means mentioned in paragraph (i) above.**LAPCP Regulations 2020 Part 2 Reg 13(b)
  11. 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.
  12. The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(k) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
  13. Subject to standing order 3(l), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes.
  14. In accordance with standing order 3(k), 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.
  15. 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.
  16. A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his commands to the chairman of the meeting.
  17. 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.
  18. **Subject to standing order 3(t), 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.**
  19. **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
  20. **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.**
  21. **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.**
  22. **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 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.**
  23. **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.**
  24. **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*
  25. **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands.**or,  
      Members to verbally announce their vote each in turn.  
        
      **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.
  26. The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:
      1. the time and media used to conduct the meeting;
      2. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent;
      3. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
      4. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
      5. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;
      6. if there was a public participation session; and
      7. the resolutions made.
  27. **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.**
  28. **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 four.**
  29. **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.  
        
      *See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.*
  30. A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2 and a half hours.

# COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS

* + 1. Subject to standing order 5j viii in an election year
    2. **The members of the council may appoint working groups to carry out day to day activities that have been pre-approved by council. These groups may include non- councillors unless it is a group which manages and controls the finances of the Council.**
    3. The Council may appoint working groups and/or other groups as may be necessary, at any time and:
    4. shall determine their terms of reference;
    5. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of the group to coincide with the council meetings up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
    6. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a group;
    7. shall, after it has appointed the members of a group, appoint the lead councillor (chairman) of the group;
    8. shall permit the group, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the group;
    9. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of the group, which shall be no less than three;
    10. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting;
    11. shall determine if the public and/or press are permitted to attend the meetings of a group either in person or remotely and also the advance public notice requirements, if any.
    12. may dissolve a group.

# ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

* 1. **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office.**
  2. **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.**
  3. **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 7:30pm.**LAPCP Regulations 2020 Part 6 (c)
  4. **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**
  5. **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.** LAPCP Regulations 2020 Part 6 (c)
  6. **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.**
  7. **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.**
  8. **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.**
  9. **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.**
  10. 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:

1. **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;**
2. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;
3. Receipt of the notes of the last group meetings
4. Consideration of the recommendations made by any group
5. Review of delegation arrangements for groups
6. Review of the terms of reference for the groups
7. Appointment of members to existing groups
8. Appointment of any new groups in accordance with standing order 4;
9. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
10. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities,
    * 1. not-for-profit bodies and businesses.
11. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;
12. 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;
13. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;
14. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
15. Review of the Council’s and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
16. Review of the Council’s complaints procedure;
17. 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*);
18. Review of the Council’s policy for dealing with the press/media;
19. Review of the Council’s employment policies and procedures;
20. Review of the Council’s expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.
21. Determining the time and choice of media of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

## EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIl AND GROUPS

* 1. **The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
  2. **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 either physically or electronically by the two councillors.**
  3. The chairman of a group may convene an extraordinary meeting of the group at any time.
  4. If the chairman of a group does not call an extraordinary meeting within 3 days of having been requested to do so by 2 members of the group any 2 members of that group may convene an extraordinary meeting of the group.

# PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

* 1. 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.
  2. 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.

# VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

* 1. 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.

1. **MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER**
   1. 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.
   2. 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 8 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
   3. 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.
   4. 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 8 clear days before the meeting.
   5. 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.
   6. The decision of the Proper Officer, after consultation with the chair, as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.
   7. Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.
   8. Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

# MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE

* 1. The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:
     1. In the absence of the chairman, to appoint a councillor to preside at the meeting
     2. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
     3. to move to a vote;
     4. to defer consideration of a motion;
     5. to refer a motion to a particular group;
     6. to approve the absence of councillors;
     7. to approve the accuracy of the minutes of previous meetings;
     8. to change the order of business on the agenda;
     9. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
     10. to dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting;
     11. To answer questions from councillors
     12. to require a written report;
     13. to appoint a group or any councillor, to the group, (including substitutes) thereto;
     14. To receive nominations to a group;
     15. To dissolve a group
     16. To hear and consider the notes produced at a group meeting
     17. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by an employee, professional advisor, expert or consultant;
     18. To authorise payment of monies up to but not exceeding **£500**
     19. to extend the time limits for speaking;
     20. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
     21. to give the consent of the council, if such consent is required by standing orders
     22. to silence or exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
     23. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
     24. to suspend a particular standing order except those which are mandatory by law.

**(As depicted in bold type in this document);**

* + 1. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to make arrangements for those representatives to report back the activities of the outside bodies;
    2. to adjourn the meeting; or
    3. to close the meeting.

# MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION *See also standing order 20*

# 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.

* 1. **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 or which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (eg: the Limitation Act 1980).**
  2. **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.**
  3. **Councillors, staff, the Council’s contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

1. **DRAFT MINUTES**
   1. 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.
   2. 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).
   3. 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 Council and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
   4. 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 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.”
   5. **The chairman or an agreed councillor or officer of the councillor 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.**
   6. 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).*

1. All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
2. Unless a councillor has been granted a dispensation, the councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which the councillor has a disclosable pecuniary interest. The councillor may return to the meeting after, it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.
3. Unless a councillor has been granted a dispensation, the councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which the councillor has another interest if so required by the Council’s code of conduct. The councillor may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which the councillor had the interest.
4. **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.
5. A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer, or by a meeting of the Council, or committee or sub-committee for which the dispensation is required and that decision is final.
6. A dispensation request shall confirm:
   1. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest

to which the request for the dispensation relates;

* 1. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
  2. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
  3. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.

1. 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.
2. **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(e) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply:**
3. **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;**
4. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council’s area; or**
5. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**
6. **CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS**
   1. 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.
   2. 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).
   3. The Council may:
      1. Provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirements;
      2. Seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;
      3. Refer the complaint to the SKDC Standards Committee.
7. **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.**

# PROPER OFFICER

* 1. The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) or a trusted third party individual, nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
  2. The Proper Officer shall:
     1. **at least seven clear days before a meeting of the council,**
        + **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 and location of the meeting and,**
        + **Provide, in a conspicuous places (noticeboards in the village) and by publishing on the parish council website, public notice of the time, place and agenda.**

LAPCP Regulations 2020 Part 1 Reg 13 (a)

*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;*

* + 1. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least five (5) working days before the meeting confirming the withdrawal of a particular motion
    2. **convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office;**
    3. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors, if requested**
    4. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
    5. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
    6. hold a copy of every councillor’s register of interests;
    7. 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;
    8. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council’s Data Protection Officer (if there is one);
    9. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
    10. Keep proper records required before and after meetings
    11. 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);
    12. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;

(*see also standing order 23);*

* + 1. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
    2. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council’s response to the local planning authority:
    3. refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chairman or in his absence the Vice-Chairman 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.
    4. Adhere to the service standards set by the council from time to time (particularly with

reference to points I and ii of this section 15).

* + 1. Liaise with District and County councils, LALAC, NALC and other governmental and council authorities to ensure that the interests of Baston Parish Council are upheld
    2. Be the point of contact to receive and process telephone calls, notices, mail, email, verbal and/or other forms of communication on behalf of the council for issues, problems or questions that arise between council meetings
    3. Escalate any urgent issues to the chair or in his/her absence the vice chair for consideration
    4. Report all forms of communication, including but not limited to those in (xix) above to the council at the next available council meeting, under the agenda item, clerks

report or correspondence

* + 1. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme;
    2. Carry out such other duties as specified in their job description and contract of employment; and
    3. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.

(s*ee also standing order 23).*

# RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

* 1. As the clerk is also the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer of the council, the clerk shall make reasonable arrangements to ensure that any bills or invoices that are due to be paid during their absence are actioned before the absence occurs.
  2. In exceptional or emergency circumstances only the head of the F&GP group shall act as RFO for an ad-hoc payment during the clerks absence.

# ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

* 1. ‘Proper practices’ in standing orders refer to the most recent version of ‘Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners’ Guide’.
  2. All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council’s financial regulations.
  3. 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:
     1. the Council’s receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
     2. the Council’s aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;
     3. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and

which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

* 1. As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:
     1. 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
     2. 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.
  2. 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 31 August.

# FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

* 1. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:
     1. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
     2. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;
     3. 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;
     4. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council’s accounts and/or orders of payments; and
     5. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£5,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
  2. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
  3. **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).**
  4. 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:
     1. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;
     2. 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;
     3. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;
     4. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
     5. 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;
     6. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
  5. The Council, is not bound to accept the lowest value tender, estimate or quotation

# HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

* 1. A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council is

subject to standing order 11.

* 1. Subject to the Council’s policy regarding absences from work, the Council’s most senior member of staff shall notify the chairman of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence at its next meeting.
  2. The chairman of 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 member of staff’s job title]. The reviews and appraisal shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution.
  3. 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.
  4. Subject to the Council’s policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by [the member of staff’s job title] relates to the chairman or vice-chairman, this shall be communicated to another member which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution.
  5. 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.
  6. 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).
  7. Records documenting reasons for an employees absence to to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for the same.

# RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

*See also standing order 21.*

* 1. **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.**

# RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION

(Below is not an exclusive list).

*See also standing order 11.*

* 1. The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
  2. **The council shall keep written records relating to employees secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected.**
  3. **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**
  4. **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
  5. **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.**
  6. **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.**
  7. **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

1. **RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA**
   1. 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.
   2. In accordance with the Council’s policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media, councillors shall not in their official capacity provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media.

# 23. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS

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

1. A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
2. **Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors (The Chairman + 1 other) may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**
3. **COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS**
4. 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.
5. 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.

# RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES

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

1. Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council make any commitments to third parties.
2. All correspondence addressed to the Council should normally go to the Clerk but when correspondence is addressed to an individual Councillor the following applies:

Written Correspondence

1. On receipt of written correspondence to a Councillor by a resident or a third party, all such correspondence should be acknowledged by the Councillor who received it and forwarded to the Clerk for action or inclusion on the next meeting agenda.
2. By association with their position, permission is granted to the leads of Council groups, or their nominated deputy, to correspond with 3rd parties relevant to Group activities from time to time, by the full council. All correspondence forwarded to the Clerk will be referenced and circulated to Councillors for information and where necessary a requested response or comment.
3. All correspondence will be reviewed at the next full council meeting.

Verbal Communication

1. Councillors may express their personal opinion on matters raised to them verbally, but may not pre-empt the opinion of other councillors or that of full council.
2. Members of the public raising a query, should be advised to contact the Clerk directly or the Councillor should make a written record of the query and send it to the Clerk.

Confidentiality

1. Councillors shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believed or ought to be aware, is of a confidential nature.
2. A Councillor in break of the provisions of standing order (I) above may be removed from a meeting by the resolution of the council.

# STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY

* 1. 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.
  2. 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 2 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.
  3. The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council’s standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
  4. The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_