

# **Covington Parish Meeting** **Standing Orders.**

## **1. MEETINGS**

- 1.1 Meetings shall be held in each year on such dates in April and October as the Meeting may direct, at Covington Village Hall and will commence at 1930hrs unless the Parish Meeting otherwise decides at a previous meeting. A minimum of 20 working days notice shall be provided for these meetings.
- 1.2 The Meeting held in April will form the Covington Parish Annual Meeting.
- 1.3 Notice of a Parish Meeting shall be posted on the village notice board situated at the junction of Cross Street and Keyston Road. See appendix 'B'.**
- 1.4 The Clerk shall take reasonable steps to ensure that the notice of a meeting receives as wide a circulation as can be reasonably expected.
- 1.5 The Covington Parish Meeting consists of those persons recorded on the Electoral Role for the Parish of Covington. Other persons may attend but do not have a vote.
- 1.6 All correspondence from or sent to the Covington Parish Meeting shall be through the Clerk. This in no way affects the right of residents to contact Authorities directly.
- 1.7 The minutes of any meeting shall record the names of all present.

## **2. OFFICERS OF THE PARISH MEETING**

- 2.1 There are four official posts within the Covington Parish Meeting, Clerk, Proper Officer, Responsible Financial Officer and Chairman. All four posts are Honourary  
See Appendix 'A'. ADVISE from the Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils.

## **3. CHAIRMAN OF MEETING**

- 3.1 The person presiding at a meeting may exercise all the powers and duties of the Chairman in relation to the conduct of the Meeting.**
- 3.2 The elected Chairman of Covington Parish Meeting shall preside at the next Annual Meeting until a successor is elected

#### **4. PROPER OFFICER**

4.1 Where a statute, regulation or order confers functions or duties on the 'Proper Officer' of the Parish Meeting in the following cases, a) to h) it shall be the Clerk.

- a) To receive declarations of Acceptance of office;
- b) To receive and record notices disclosing interest at the meeting;
- c) To receive and retain plans and documents;
- d) To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Parish Meeting;
- e) To receive copies of bylaws made by the District Council;
- f) To certify copies of bylaws made by the Meeting;
- g) To sign and issue notices advising of the agenda and dates of Parish Meetings;
- h) To keep proper records of Parish Meetings.

#### **5. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER**

5.1. The Clerk appointed to the Covington Parish Meeting will perform the functions of the 'Responsible Financial Officer'. See Appendix 'A'.

#### **6. QUORUM**

6.1 Six residents in addition to the Clerk and the Chairman shall constitute a quorum.

6.2 If a quorum is not present when the Parish Meeting meets or if during a meeting the number of residents present and not debarred by reason of a declared interest falls below the quorum, the business not transacted at that meeting shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Chairman may fix.

6.3 A quorum for the Parish Meeting Planning Committee shall be three.

#### **7. VOTING**

7.1 Residents attending a Parish Meeting shall vote by a show of hands, or, if at least two residents so request, by ballot.

7.2 All questions at a Covington Parish Meeting shall be decided by a majority of those present and voting thereon.

**7.3 If a resident present so requires, the Clerk shall record the name of the residents who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it. Such a request must be made before moving to the next business.**

**7.4 Subject to 7.5 below the Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote. In the case of an equality of votes the Chairman may give a casting vote even though he gave no original vote.**

**7.5 The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Chairman.**

## **8. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

8.1 At each Annual Meeting the first business shall be as follows:

- a) **To elect a Chairman of the Parish Meeting.**  
The person so elected may not serve as a Chairman for more than three consecutive years and shall not be eligible for re-election until 12 months after completion of their third consecutive year in office.
- b) **To receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office or, if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.**
- c) To review the terms for repayment of expenses incurred by The Clerk, Proper Officer, and the Responsible Financial Officer
- d) To appoint an independent Internal Auditor.
- e) To appoint Committees or any other officers which the Parish Meeting deems appropriate.
- f) To appoint a Parish Meeting Planning Committee to consist of: a minimum of five elected residents.
- g) To appoint representatives to any other organisation or authority that the Parish Meeting deems appropriate.

Thereafter the meeting shall take the form as at 8.2

## **8.2 ORDER OF BUSINESS AT A NORMAL MEETING**

- a) To read and consider the minutes:
- b) **After consideration to approve the signature of the Minutes by the person presiding as a correct record:**
- c) **To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done:**
- d) To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting:
- e) To receive such communications as the person presiding may wish to lay before the meeting:
- f) To receive and consider reports and minutes of committees:
- g) To consider resolutions or recommendations in the order in which they have been notified.
- h) To authorise the signing of orders for payments.
- i) To receive and consider reports from officers of the meeting.
- j) Any Other Business.

- i). this may consist of any matters or issues relevant to the Covington Parish Meeting which have become of interest or concern since the publication of the Agenda
- ii) provided that written notification of the matter has been supplied to the Clerk prior to the meeting.
- iii) these matters may be discussed and voted upon or referred to a Special Meeting or referred to the next Parish Meeting.

8.3 At every meeting other than the Annual Meeting the first business shall be to appoint a Chairman if the Chairman is absent.

8.4 After the first business has been completed, the order of business, unless the Meeting otherwise decides on the grounds of urgency, shall be as in 8.2a) – j) shown above.

8.5 A motion to vary the order of business on the ground of urgency may:  
a) be proposed by the Chairman or by any resident present and, if proposed by the Chairman, may be put to the vote without being seconded,  
AND  
b) shall be put to the vote without discussion.

## **9. RESOLUTION MOVED ON NOTICE**

9.1 Except as provided by these Standing Orders, no resolution may be moved unless the business to which it relates has been put on the agenda by the Clerk or the mover has given notice in writing of its terms and has delivered the notice to the Clerk at least fourteen calendar days before the meeting.

9.2 The Clerk shall insert in the final notice of Meeting, for every meeting, all motions or recommendations properly given in the order in which they have been received.

9.3 If a resolution or recommendation specified in the agenda is not moved either by the resident who gave notice of it or by any other member, it shall be, unless postponed by the Parish Meeting, treated as withdrawn, and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

9.4 Every resolution or recommendation shall be relevant to some subject over which the Meeting has power, or which affects its area.

## **10. RESOLUTIONS MOVED WITHOUT NOTICE**

10.1 Resolutions dealing with the following matters may be moved without notice:

- a) To appoint a Chairman of the meeting;
- b) To correct the Minutes;
- c) To approve the Minutes;
- d) To alter the order of business;
- e) To proceed to the next business;
- f) To close or adjourn the debate;
- g) To refer the matter to a committee;
- h) To appoint a committee or any members thereof;
- i) To adopt a report;
- j) To authorise the signing or sealing of documents;
- k) To amend a motion;
- l) To give leave to withdraw a resolution or an amendment;
- m) To exclude the press and the public;
- n) To silence or eject from the meeting a member named for misconduct;
- o) To invite a member having an interest in the subject matter under debate to remain;
- p) To give consent of the Parish Meeting where such consent is required by these Standing Orders;
- q) To suspend any Standing Order except those which are mandatory by law.

## **11. EXPENDITURE**

**11.1 Orders for the payment of money shall be authorised by resolution of the meeting and signed by the Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer.**

11.2 In case of one of the signatories at para.11.1 above being unavailable the reserve signatory will be the immediate past Chairman of the Covington Parish Meeting.

## **12. COMMITTEES**

12.1 The Parish Meeting may appoint a committee of residents with voting rights for any purpose which, in the opinion of the Parish Meeting, would be better regulated and managed by such a committee.

12.2 The Chairman of the Parish Meeting may be a voting member of every Committee, but shall not be the Chairman of any such Committee.

- 12.3 Members of all Committees shall be elected at the Covington Parish Annual Meeting and residents may be elected to more than one Committee. At least one member of each Committee shall be replaced annually.
- 12.4 Members of Committees may not normally serve on any one Committee for more than four consecutive years but may be re-elected to that Committee after a period of 12 months.
- 12.5 Casual vacancies may be temporarily filled by residents as they arise on the recommendation of the Chairman of that Committee after consultation with the Clerk.

### **13. VOTING IN COMMITTEES**

- 13.1 Every Committee shall at its first meeting before proceeding to any other business elect a Chairman who shall hold office until the next Annual Parish Meeting and shall settle its programme of meetings for the year.
- 13.2 Members of Committees shall vote by show of hands, or, if at least two members so request, by ballot.
- 13.3 Chairmen of Committees shall in the case of equality of votes have a second or casting vote.

### **14. PRESENCE OF NON-MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS.**

- 14.1 A resident who has proposed a resolution, which has been referred to any committee, may explain their resolution to the Committee and be subject to questioning by the Committee members only.
- 14.2 Any resident shall be entitled to be present at any Committee Meeting of which they are not a member, unless the Parish Meeting Standing Orders state otherwise. They may only speak at the Chairman's request, but may not vote.
- 14.3 The Clerk of the Parish Meeting may be present at any Committee meeting at the invitation of the Chairman of the Committee or at the request of the Chairman of the Parish Meeting.

### **15. ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

- 15.1 Except as provided in paragraph 15.2 of these Standing Orders or by statute all accounts for payment and claims upon the Parish Meeting shall be laid before the Parish Meeting.
- 15.2 Where it is necessary to make a payment before it has been authorised by the Parish Meeting, the Responsible Financial Officer shall certify such payment as to its correctness and urgency. Such payments shall be authorised by the Responsible Financial Officer for payment with the approval of the Chairman of the Parish Meeting.
- 15.3 All payments ratified under subparagraph 15.2 shall be separately included in the next schedule of payments laid before the Parish Meeting.
- 15.4 The responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each resident attending the ordinary meeting next after the end of the financial year a statement of receipts and payments.

## **16. PARISH PRECEPTS**

- 16.1 The Responsible Financial Officer, after consultation with the Chairman of the Parish Meeting shall provide the Parish Meeting with a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming financial year. This estimate is to be submitted to the Meeting held in October.

## **17. INTERESTS. Personal, Prejudicial, Predetermined**

### **Personal Interest**

- 17.1.1 A resident must regard himself or herself as having a 'personal interest' if a decision upon a matter might reasonable be regarded as affecting themselves, the well being or financial position of a relative or friend, or any connected employment or business to a greater extent than other council tax payers or residents within the Parish of Covington.
- 17.1.2 A 'personal interest' should be declared in all cases. The declaration of a 'personal interest' does not automatically prevent a resident from participating fully in debate and voting. This will depend upon whether or not the 'personal interest' is 'prejudicial'.
- 17.1.3 When a 'personal interest' is also a 'prejudicial interest' a resident should consider withdrawing from the debate. It is for the resident to decide whether they have a 'prejudicial interest'. In order to achieve this decision a resident must consider whether an ordinary member of the public, knowing all the relevant facts, would think that the 'personal interest' was so significant that it would prejudice their decision making.

### **Prejudicial Interest**

- 17.2.1 A resident declaring a 'prejudicial interest' may, with the consent of the Parish Meeting, participate fully in debate and voting provided that they do not seek to improperly influence a decision about the matter, otherwise from the room where the matter is under discussion.
- 17.2.2 The following are not considered to be 'prejudicial interests':
- a) Where a resident is also a member of another relevant authority. i.e. a resident sitting on more than one tier of Local Government.
  - b) Where a resident holds a position of general management or control in another public authority, i.e. a resident may also be the Clerk of another Parish.
  - c) Where a resident has been appointed by the Parish Meeting to act as its representative on another body.
  - d) Where a member is receiving social security benefits.
  - e) Where a resident has received legitimate out of pocket expenses from the Parish meeting.

### **Predetermined Interest**

- 17.3. A 'predetermined interest' is where a resident is closed to the merits of any arguments relating to a particular issue and makes a decision on that issue without taking them into account. Rarely will membership of a particular organisation amount to predetermination unless it has a particular vested interest in the outcome of a specific decision that the resident is involved in making.
- 17.4 The Clerk shall record in the Minutes particulars of any notice given by any resident or any officer of the Parish Meeting of a 'personal' or 'prejudicial' or 'predetermined' interest.

## **18. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000**

- 18.1 Under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 the Parish Meeting is required to make a declaration as to what and how certain information will be made available.
- 18.2 The following information will be available in the manner indicated.

### **18.2.1 DOCUMENTS RELATING TO MEETINGS, INTERNAL PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES.**

**Minutes or notes of all Parish Meetings and Committee Meetings are available for inspection, copies of such documents, limited to the previous 2 years, will be available from the Clerk to the Parish Meeting for which there may be a charge.**



## **18.2.2 PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

**Responses to planning applications will be available for inspection by contacting the Clerk to the Parish Meeting, for which there will be no charge.**

**Exclusions: Copies of planning consultations, the Development Plan, Structure Plan, Local Plan and Rights of Way/Footpath maps, all of which are available from the local planning and/or highway authority respectively.**

## **18.2.3 AUDIT AND ACCOUNTS**

**The annual return form and the annual statutory report, by both the independent internal and external auditor will be made available for inspection by contacting the Clerk to the Parish Meeting, for which there will be no charge.**

## **19. LIAISON WITH THE COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

19.1 District and County Councillors representing Kimbolton Ward are invited to attend the ordinary meetings of the Parish Meeting and where the business is relevant to the authorities on which they serve, may at the invitation of the Chairman speak.

## **20. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

20.1 The Clerk shall, as soon as it is received, enter in a book kept for the purpose the following particulars of every planning application notified to the Parish Meeting.

- i) The date on which it was received;
- ii) The name of the applicant;
- iii) The place to which it relates;
- iv) A summary of the nature of the application;
- v) The decision of the Parish Meeting or the Parish Meeting Planning Committee.
- vi) The decision of the Planning Authority.

20.2 The Clerk shall notify the Chairman of the Parish Meeting and the Chairman of the Planning Committee of every application within 48 hours of receiving it.

- 20.3 The following planning applications within the Parish of Covington shall be referred directly to a Parish Meeting.
- i) Application for the change of use of land or premises.
  - ii) Application for new building.
  - iii) Application for extension to existing property where the extension exceeds a dimension of 70 cubic metres.
- 20.4 Any planning application within or without the Parish of Covington that, in the opinion of the Parish Meeting Planning Committee, warrants wider consideration shall be referred to a Parish Meeting
- 20.5 In the event that the Covington Planning Committee cannot reach agreement on an application the application shall be referred to a Parish Meeting.
- 20.6 All planning applications with the exception of those which fall under headings 20.3 i) ii) iii) shall be considered by the Covington Parish Meeting Planning Committee.
- 20.6.1
- i) Upon notification of a planning application the Chairman of the Covington Parish Meeting Planning Committee shall within three days of receiving notification convene a meeting of that Committee in order to consider the application and prepare a response. Notice of the meeting shall be circulated in accordance with Appendix 'B'.
  - ii) At any meeting involving planning, interested Parties should be asked to retire after making their presentation and answering questions. Applicants may be asked to return for further clarification if necessary, provided they leave prior to the vote
- 20.7 The Chairman of the Covington Parish Planning Committee will be responsible for ensuring that:
- i) Accurate minutes of all meeting are prepared:
  - ii) Copies of the Minutes are circulated to the Chairman of the Parish Meeting, the Clerk to the Parish Meeting and to all members of the Covington Parish Planning Committee:
  - iii) A written report of the activities of the Planning Committee is made to each Covington Parish Meeting.
- 20.9 Any application which has been objected to by a Parish Meeting or the Parish Meeting Planning Committee and is subsequently amended and re-submitted shall be put to a Parish Meeting for consideration.
- 20.10 Where a planning application has been considered by either a Parish Meeting or the Parish Meeting Planning Committee the official response must be made through the Clerk to the Covington Parish Meeting,(see paragraph 1.6) express the opinion of the meeting as a whole, not of specific individuals and must clearly state the reasons for support or

rejection.

- 20.11 All papers relating to each planning application are to be retained by the Clerk to the Parish Meeting in such a manner as to be accessible for examination.

## **21 CONTRACTS**

- 21.1 The Parish Meeting will follow the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting (CIPFA) recommendations for contracts, specifically:
- 21.2 Notice of a contract shall state the general nature of the intended contract and state the name and address of the person to whom tenders are to be addressed and the last date by which those tenders should reach that person in the ordinary course of the post.
- 21.3 Tenders shall be opened by the Clerk or other person to whom tenders are required to be addressed on the date specified pursuant to paragraph of this document and shall be reported by the person who opened them to the Parish Meeting or, where the tenders have been sought by a Committee to that Committee.
- 21.4 Neither the Parish Meeting nor any Committee, is bound to accept the lowest or any other tender.
- 21.5 If no tenders are received or if all the tenders are identical the Parish Meeting may make such arrangements for procuring the goods or materials or executing the works as it thinks fit.
- 21.6 In emergency situations, e.g. where works are required for legal or safety reasons, or to minimise further damage, best endeavour will be used to follow due process within the limits of the available time.

## **22. RESIDENTS TENDERING FOR SUPPLIES & SERVICES TO THE PARISH MEETING**

- 22.1 Residents shall not be precluded from tendering for supplies or services to the Parish Meeting provided that the requirements of the Covington Parish Meeting Standing Orders are complied with on all occasions.

## **23 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

- 23.1 In the following instances a Special General Meeting can be called by the Chairman of the Parish Meeting, between the normal meetings of the

Parish Meeting, at any time, providing as wide a circulation of notice of the meeting is given as the circumstances allow:  
See 1.3 & 1.4 above and Appendix 'B'.

1. The business is urgent
2. Would take up excessive time at a normal meeting or
3. A written request by a notice bearing the names of at least six residents is received.

23.2 The notice of the meeting shall set out the business to be considered at the Special General Meeting and no other business shall be transacted at that meeting.

#### **24. SMOKING AND DRINKING ALCOHOL AT PARISH MEETINGS**

24.1 Smoking and drinking alcohol is not permitted during Parish Meetings.

#### **25. CODE OF CONDUCT ON COMPLAINTS**

25.1 The Parish Meeting shall deal with complaints of maladministration allegedly committed by the Parish Meeting or by any officer or resident in such manner as adopted by the Parish Meeting except for those complaints that should be properly directed to the Standards Board for consideration. The Clerk to the Parish Meetings holds details of the procedures for pursuing a complaint that must be made available upon request.

#### **26. VARIATION, REVOCATION AND SUSPENSION OF COVINGTON PARISH MEETING STANDING ORDERS.**

21.1 Any or every part of the Covington Parish Meeting Standing Orders, except those in **BOLD** type, may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

21.2 A resolution to permanently add to, vary, or revoke any part of Covington Parish Meeting Standing Orders may be proposed, seconded and voted upon at a Parish Meeting. If carried by two thirds of those present and voting then the Covington Parish Meeting Standing Orders shall be amended accordingly.

#### **27. COVINGTON PARISH MEETING STANDING ORDERS TO BE AVAILABLE**

27.1 A copy of Covington Parish Meeting Standing Orders shall be available, if requested, to each residence in Covington.

**28. DOCUMENT ENDS.**

## **COVINGTON PARISH MEETING STANDING ORDERS**

### **Appendix A.**

### **Advice from the Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils.**

#### **1. OFFICERS OF THE PARISH MEETING.**

There are four official posts within the Parish Meeting.

The Clerk;

The Proper Officer;

The Responsible Financial Officer;

The Chairman.

- Usually the Parish Meeting give the appointment of Clerk, Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer to the Clerk. (If they do so it should be written into their contract of employment)
- If someone other than The Clerk is appointed to any of the above posts, they cannot be paid for their time – only expenses incurred.

**2. CHAIRMAN:** This post must be awarded to a resident who has signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office form. The term of office is only for one year and the Chairman needs to sign a second Declaration of Office form as 'Chairman', even if being re-elected.

(It is recommended that Parish Meetings consider adding to Standing Orders that a resident can only stand for three consecutive years before standing down for one year to share the responsibilities).

#### **General responsibilities;**

- Has authority at meetings and should be obeyed;
- Is the interface between public and the Meeting;
- The one to welcome speakers and make them 'feel at home';
- To ensure that decisions made by the Meeting are clear for The Clerk to act upon;
- To ensure that the Parish Meeting acts as a corporate body at all times; There is now no such thing as 'Chair's action'. It is now case law that no decision or action can be delegated to a single resident. (Only to The Clerk).

**3. THE CLERK:** Chief Executive to the Parish Meeting. The Clerk is there to provide background information in an advisory role. Clerks do not make decisions, unless delegated to do so within the Parish Meeting's Standing Order policy.

#### **General responsibilities:**

- To ensure the Parish Meeting acts within the law;
- To advise and implement policy;
- To manage resources;
- To maintain financial records – as agreed;
- To deal with electors;

- To oversee any other person employed by the Parish Meeting;
- The Clerk can have delegated emergency powers for ordering emergency repairs and to raise cheques. These would be itemised on the next agenda as 'retrospective payments' and presented with the invoice/authorisation. There is usually a capping imposed above which an extra-ordinary meeting would be called.
- To prepare and distribute notices, agendas and minutes as directed by the Parish Meeting, their Standing Orders and the law.

**4. PROPER OFFICER:** As the role of this post is to act on behalf on the Returning Officer at District Council during any election, by-election or co-option – it is usually given to The Clerk as the employee of the Meeting.

**General Responsibilities:**

- To undertake instructions from the Returning Officer, usually to put up notices by a set time and date announcing elections.
- To obtain nomination packs at election time for prospective candidates to collect.
- To preside at any co-option by ballot of the council if no poll has been called to fill a casual vacancy. The Chairman does not have a casting vote during this process.

**5. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER (RFO):** The appointed Clerk to the Parish Meeting is not automatically the appointed RFO. This could be because of time commitment, or merely that the person chosen as Clerk is not prepared to take total responsibility for the accounts. It could be that a resident takes on this official post and The Clerk would do the everyday book-keeping, raising cheques, paying in, salaries, etc., whilst the RFO would be responsible for bank reconciliation, financial risk assessment policy, year end accounts, budgets etc. Or the RFO could be totally responsible for all finance

**General Responsibilities:**

- To ensure that a formal and detailed budget is set justifying the request for precept;
- To ensure residents are supplied with regular budgetary control statements; (Recommended minimum quarterly)
- To ensure that the precept request is sent to District on time;
- To organise the Parish Meeting's insurance;
- (To ensure pay, tax and NI is correctly paid;) DELETE
- To ensure that a risk assessment policy is adopted by the Parish Meeting and regularly monitored;
- To ensure that the year end accounts are prepared and are accurate;
- To ensure that the Parish Meeting appoint an independent auditor and that they are abiding by Audit Regulations;
- To ensure that the year end statement is signed by all parties and submitted to the external auditor on time;
- To ensure all financial queries are answered adequately.

## **Covington Parish Meeting Standing Orders.**

### **Appendix 'B'**

#### **Management of Covington Parish Meeting Minutes and Notices.**

1. Notice of a forthcoming meeting and a request for items for the agenda to be posted on the village notice board in accordance with paragraph 1.3, Covington Parish Meeting Standing Orders, along with the Minutes for Approval from the immediate previous meeting.
2. The notice of a forthcoming meeting and a request for items for the agenda shall be circulated by e-mail
3. A copy of the 'Minutes for Approval' to be posted on the village notice board at the junction of Cross Street and Keyston Road within 30 days after a meeting.
4. Copies of the 'Minutes for Approval' to be circulated within 30 days after a meeting by e-mail in accordance with the provisions at paragraph 2 above.
5. A copy of the 'Minutes for Approval' will be available at Parish Meetings for those persons attending who have not been in receipt of copies as at 4 above.
6. 'Approved Minutes' will be retained by the Clerk to the Covington Parish Meeting and will be available for inspection in accordance with paragraph 18.2.1, Covington Parish Meeting Standing Orders.
  - a. **'DRAFT MINUTES'**.  
Minutes prepared by the Clerk for review by the Chairman of the Parish Meeting.
  - b. **'MINUTES FOR APPROVAL'**.  
Minutes that have gone through the procedure at a. above and has yet to be presented to a Parish Meeting.
  - c. **'APPROVED MINUTES'**.  
Minutes that have been presented to and approved by the Parish Meeting.



## **COVINGTON PARISH MEETING APPENDIX 'C'**

### **CODE OF CONDUCT - COMPLAINTS**

Members of the public, and Parish Residents should be able to make effective representations, including complaints about any aspect of the services provided to the village, or governance. The following procedure shall also apply to complaints received from any source.

A copy of this complaints procedure shall be given to any person who wishes to make a complaint about the Parish Meeting and/or its Members or Clerk.

All complaints and representations shall be monitored, and where deemed appropriate, initially investigated by the Chairman and two other Residents nominated by the Parish Meeting. At no time shall a Member against whom a complaint has been made participate in the investigation. The Clerk shall support the Chairman in this process. Should the complaint be made against the Clerk, he or she will take no part in the investigation.

A written record shall be maintained for all complaints or representations, recording the nature of the complaint, the action taken in response to the complaint, and the outcome of the investigation. Attached to this procedure is a pro forma to be used for this purpose.

Complaints shall be reported to the Parish Meeting and may be used to further develop Parish Meeting practice, standing orders and/or policies and procedures. The Parish Meeting shall, periodically, review all complaints in a given period so as to inform the future provision of services and governance.

### **Informal Complaints**

Every opportunity shall be made for the complaint to be resolved informally at an early stage. Informal complaints and representations should, wherever possible, be dealt with quickly, and written confirmation of the outcome of the investigation shall be sent to the complainant within 14 working days.

### **Formal Complaints**

Formal complaints and representations shall, subject to ongoing communication with the complainant, take no longer than 28 working days to resolve.

Where the complaint is against an individual; where the complaint cannot be resolved informally as described in the aforementioned paragraph; and further where it has been formalised but cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, the person making the complaint should in the first instance refer the matter to the Standards Board for England.

The contact details are as follows:

The Standards Board for England,

Fourth Floor,  
40 Lever Street,  
Manchester M1 1BB.

Telephone: 0161 817 5300  
Fax: 0161817 5499  
E mail: enquiries@standardsboard.gov.uk

## **CODE OF PRACTICE**

- 1 The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the Parish Meeting's procedures or administration in writing to the clerk or other nominated proper officer;
- 2 If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk or other proper officer, they may be advised to put it to the Chairman of the Parish Meeting or nominated deputy.
- 3 The Clerk or other nominated proper officer shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the Parish Meeting or by the Committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints.
- 4 The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representatives as they wish.
- 5 Seven clear working days prior to the meeting the complainant shall provide the Parish Meeting with copies of any documentation or other evidence that they wish to refer to at the meeting. The Parish Meeting shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

### **At the Meeting**

- 6 The Parish Meeting shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Parish Meeting in public.
- 7 Chairman or nominated deputy to introduce everyone.
- 8 Chairman or nominated deputy to explain procedure.
- 9 Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
- 10 Members to ask any question of the complainant.

- 11 If relevant, clerk or other proper officer to explain Parish Meeting's position.
- 12 Members to ask any question of the clerk or other proper officer.
- 13 Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
- 14 Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be asked to leave the room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back.
- 15 Clerk or other proper officer and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when a decision will be made.

### **After the Meeting**

- 16 Decision confirmed in writing within seven working days, together with details of any action to be taken.

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Clerk - financial officer	5. 1		2
Clerk - proper officer	4. 1		2
Code of Conduct - complaints	25. 1	C	12
Committees	12. 1-5		5
Committees - appointment of Chairman	13. 1		6
Committees - Parish Chairman's role	12. 2		5
Complaints	25. 1	C	12
Contracts	21. 1-6		11
Correspondence	1. 6		1
County and District Councillors	19. 1		9
Declaration of acceptance	8. 1b)		3
Expenditure	11. 1-2		5
Financial Officer	5. 1	A. 5	2
Financial Officer - Advice from CALC		A. 5	14
Financial Statement	15. 4		7
Freedom of Information	18. 1-2		8
Interests	17. 1-4		7
Length of service - members of committees	12. 3-5		6
Length of service - Parish Chairman	8. 1a)		3
Minutes - record of those present	1. 7		1
Minutes of Meetings - Management		B. 3-6	15
Notice of meetings - circulation	1. 4		1
Notice of Meetings - Management		B. 1-2	15
Notice of meetings - Parish Meeting	1. 3-4	B. 1-2.	1
Notice of meetings - Planning Committee	20. 7		10
Notice of meetings - special general meetings	23. 1-2		11
Officers	2. 1		1
Officers - Advice from CALC		A. 1	13
Order of business at Annual Meeting	8. 1		3

Order of business at normal meetings	8. 2		3
Personal Interests	17. 1-4		7
Planning Applications	20. 1-11		9
Planning Applications - to be dealt with by full Parish Meeting	20. 3,4,5, 9		9
Planning Applications - to be dealt with by planning committee	20. 6		10
Planning Committee - appointment	8. 1f)		3
Precept	16. 1		7
Predetermined Interest	17.3.4		7
Proper Officer	4. 1	A. 4	2
Proper Officer - Advice from CALC		A. 4	14
Quorum	6. 1-3		2
Quorum - Planning Committee	6. 3		2
Resolutions moved on notice	9. 1-4		4
Resolutions moved without notice	10. 1a) - q)		5
Responsibilities - Advice from CALC		A. 6	14
Right to attend meetings of committees	14. 1-3		6
Right to attend meetings of Parish Meeting	1. 5		1
Smoking at meetings	24. 1		12
Special General Meetings	23. 1-2		11
Standing Orders - availability	27		12
Standing Orders - variation, revocation and suspension	26. 1		12
Tenders for supplies and services	22. 1		11
Voting - at Parish Meeting	7. 1-5		2
Voting - in committees	13. 1-3		6

Some of the Standing Orders are compulsory as they are laid down in Acts of Parliament. These are printed in **bold type**. These Standing Orders cannot be amended.