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Information
**NALC Standing
Orders**

**National Association
of Local Councils**

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FOREWORD

Local (parish and town) councils are the first tier of local government and are statutory bodies. They are independently elected and raise their own precept (a form of council tax) to fund local services.

There are 10,000 local councils in England which cover over 30% of the country. There are over 100,000 councillors serving on local councils.

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) is the sole national body representing the interests of local councils in England. NALC works in partnership with county associations to support, promote and improve local councils.

As part of NALC's work to help local councils improve, NALC has launched a Diversity Commission to support the growth of diversity and representation in local councils.

The Commission is made up of representatives from the Fawcett Society, the Local Government Association (LGA), De Montfort University, Wiltshire Association of Local Councils and local councils.

FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The financial regulations shall form part of these orders.

STANDING ORDERS WITH RESPECT TO CONTRACTS

The standing orders with respect to contracts shall form part of these orders.

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND DELEGATION TO COMMITTEES, SUB COMMITTEES AND OFFICERS

The terms of reference and delegation to committees, sub committees and officers shall form part of these orders.

MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY

In addition to any special meetings convened under these standing orders, a meeting of the Assembly shall be held quarterly as provided in a timetable of meetings approved by the assembly.

ASSEMBLY SUMMONS

At least 14 clear days before any meeting of the assembly a notice and agenda for the meeting shall be sent to every member of the assembly.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

The first business of the annual meeting shall be elect the chairman.

APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMEN

The council shall at the annual meeting appoint two vice-chairman.

CHAIRMAN OF MEETING

- If the chairman is absent or leaves the chair during a meeting, one of the vice-chairmen.
- If both the chairman and both vice-chairmen are absent, the chief executive or if absent, his nominee will call the election of a member to preside.
- All powers or duties assigned to the chairman in relation to the conduct of a meeting shall be exercised by the person presiding the meeting.

QUORUM

- A Quorum of the assembly shall be one third of full assembly.
- If there should not be present a quorum of the assembly, no meeting shall take place and the chairman shall call fresh notices of a meeting to be issues for such day as he shall determine.
- If at any time during any meeting of the assembly the chairman after counting the number of members present, declares that there is not a

quorum present, declares that there is not a quorum present, the meeting shall stand adjourned.

- The consideration of any business not transacted shall be adjourned to the next meeting of the assembly.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Except as otherwise provided, the assembly will at every meeting:

- Elect a person to preside if the chairman and vice-chairmen are absent.
- Read and approve as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting of the assembly.
- Dispose of any matters arising from the last meeting.
- Receive reports from the chairman, vice chairmen and officers.
- Receive and consider reports, minutes and recommendations of committees. Receive reports and correspondence from County Associations.
- Consider any motions submitted under these Standing Orders.
- Make appointments to committees, joint committees, sub committees or other outside bodies.
- Receive any reports from members of the assembly.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The order of business may be varied:

- At the discretion of the chairman
- By a resolution passed on a motion duly moved and seconded, which shall be moved and put without discussion.

A special meeting of the assembly shall not address any business not referred to in the resolution of the council directing the summoning of such meeting, or in the requisition requiring the summoning.

ASSEMBLY MINUTES

Any question on the accuracy of the minutes shall be raised. If no such question is raised or, if it is raised, as soon as it has been disposed of, the chairman shall put the question 'that the minutes of the assembly held on... be signed as a true record'.

NOTICES OF MOTION

Notice of every motion other than procedural motion shall be signed by the proposer and seconder and delivered, no later than 10.00 a.m. on the Friday of the week preceding the assembly meeting to the office of the chief executive.

MOTIONS TO BE SET OUT IN SUMMONS

The Chief Executive shall set out in the summons to every meeting of the Council all motions of which notice has been duly given.

MOTIONS NOT MOVED

If a motion set out in the summons is not moved by a member of council it shall be withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

SCOPE OF MOTIONS

- The chairman shall rule out any motion which is frivolous or derogatory to the Association.
- The chief executive may, after consultation with the member who has submitted a notice of motion, amend the wording for the purpose of clarification.
- No member of the assembly shall have more than two notices of motion on the summons for any single assembly meeting.

MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS WHICH MAY BE MOVED WITHOUT NOTICE

The following motions and amendments may be moved without notice:

- That an item of business specified in the summons has precedence.
- That a matter be referred to a committee.
- That leave be given to withdraw a motion.
- Amendments to motions.
- That the assembly proceed to the next business.
- That the question be now put.
- That the debate be now adjourned.
- That the assembly be adjourned.
- Suspending standing orders.
- That a member named under standing order be not further heard or shall leave the meeting.

REPORTS BY MEMBERS

A member of the assembly may present a report to a meeting of the assembly concerning the activities of any outside body of which he is a member on behalf of the council.

PRESENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES

- The chairman will call upon the chairman of the committee to move the adoption of the recommendations and the acceptance of the minutes.
- The chairman will ask if there are any questions on the minutes and members will indicate the item number. Once any questions have been dealt with by the chairman of the committee, the chairman of the assembly will put to the assembly 'that the report be received and the recommendations therein adopted'.

PRESENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF COMMITTEES

The chairman will call upon the chairman of the committee to move the adoption of the recommendations and the acceptance of minutes

RULES OF DEBATE FOR ASSEMBLY AND OTHER MEETINGS

Motions and amendments

A motion other than a procedural one or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded,

Seconders speech

- A member when seconding a motion or amendment may, if he then declares his intention to do so, reserve his speech until a later period of the debate.

Only One Member to Speak at a Time

- A member when speaking shall address the chairman

Content of speeches

- A member shall direct his speech to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a point of order.

When a Member May Speak Again

A member who has spoken on any motion shall not speak again whilst it is the subject of debate except:

- To speak on a subsequent amendment.
- To exercise of a right of reply.
- To raise a point of order.

Amendments to motions:

- Only one amendment may be moved and discussed at a time and no further amendment shall be moved until the amendment has been put to the vote, except that the chairman may permit two or more amendments to be discussed (but not voted on) together if circumstances suggest that this course would facilitate the proper conduct of the assembly's business.
- If an amendment is lost, other amendments may be moved on the original motion. If an amendment is carried, the motion as amended shall take the place of the original motion and shall become the motion upon which any further amendment may be moved.

Withdrawal of motion

A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the mover with the consent of his seconder and the Council.

Right of reply

- The mover of the motion has a right to reply at the close of debate on the motion immediately before it is put to the vote. If an amendment is moved, the mover of the original motion shall also have a right of reply at the close of the debate on the amendment and shall not otherwise speak on the amendment. The mover of the amendment shall have no right of reply to the debate on his amendment.

Motions which may be moved during debate

When a motion is under debate no other motion shall be moved except the following:

- to amend the motion;
- to adjourn the meeting;
- to adjourn the debate;
- to proceed to the next business;
- that the question be now put;
- that a member be not further heard;
- that a member be excluded from the meeting

On a motion to proceed to next business: unless in his opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed, the chairman shall first give the mover of the original motion a right of reply, and then put to the vote a motion to proceed to the next business;

On a motion that the question be now put: unless in his opinion the matter before the meeting has been insufficiently discussed, the chairman shall first put to the vote the motion that the question be now put, and if it is passed, then give the mover of the original motion his right of reply before putting his motion to the vote.

On a motion to adjourn the debate or the meeting: unless in his opinion the matter before the meeting has not been sufficiently discussed the chairman shall put the adjourned motion to the vote without giving the mover of the original motion his right of reply on that occasion.

Points of order:

- A member may rise on a point of order and shall be heard forthwith.
- A point of order shall relate only to an alleged breach of a standing order and a member shall specify the standing order and the way in which he considers it has been broken.

Points of information

A member may rise to give information. The information must be factual and relevant to the issue under discussion and may include a correction to an error of fact made by another member but may not be raised after the mover of a motion has exercised the right of reply at the close of the debate.

Chairman's ruling

The ruling of the chairman on a point of order or a point of information shall be final.

Respect for the chair

- Whenever the chairman rises during a debate the assembly shall be silent.
- Whenever the chairman rises during a debate the Council shall be silent.

Advice from officers

The chairman shall call on officers present to advise the Council as appropriate.

INTERPRETATION OF STANDING ORDERS

The ruling of the chairman, on the advice of their chief executive, as to the application of these standing orders or as to the proceedings of the assembly, shall be final.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

If at a meeting, any member of the assembly misconduct himself by persistently disregarding the ruling of the chairman or by behaving irregularly, improperly or offensively, or by wilfully obstructing the business of the assembly, the chairman or any other member may move “that the member named be not further heard”, and the motion if seconded shall be put and determined without discussion.

If the member named continues his misconduct after a motion under the foregoing paragraph has been carried, the chairman shall:

- either move “that the member named do leave the meeting” (in which case the motion shall be put and determined without seconding or discussion); or
- adjourn the meeting of the assembly for such period as he at his discretion shall consider expedient.

GENERAL DISTURBANCE

In the event of general disturbance which in the opinion of the chairman renders the due and orderly dispatch of business impossible, the chairman in addition to any other power vested in him may, without question put, adjourn the meeting of the assembly for such a period as he at his discretion shall consider expedient

VOTING

- The method of voting at meetings of the assembly shall be by show of hands, unless requested by majority resolution that it shall be by ballot. On the requisition of any four members of the assembly before the vote is

taken the voting shall be recorded so as to show how each member present and voting cast his vote.

- In the event of an equality of votes the chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

- Where there are more than two persons nominated for any position to be filled by the assembly, and of the votes cast there is not an overall majority in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken and so on until an overall majority of votes is given in favour of one person.
- If two or more persons have equal and least votes a vote should be taken to decide who shall remain in the ballot and whose name shall be struck off the list.

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Every member of the assembly attending a meeting of the assembly or of any of its committees, shall sign his name in the attendance register.

INTERESTS OF MEMBERS IN CONTRACTS AND OTHER MATTERS

If any member of the assembly has any pecuniary interest in any contract, proposed contract or other matter, that member shall withdraw from the meeting while the matter is under consideration by the assembly unless: the contract, proposed contract, or other matter is under consideration by the assembly as part of the report of a committee and is not itself the subject of debate.

MEMBERS NOT TO CONTRACT

No member of the assembly shall enter or purport to enter either orally or in writing into any contract on the assembly's behalf.

APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES

The assembly shall at the annual meeting appoint such committees and sub-committees as they consider necessary and may at any time appoint such other committees as are necessary to carry out the work of the assembly, but:

- Shall not appoint any member of a committee so as to hold office later than the next annual meeting of the assembly.
- May at any time dissolve a committee or alter its membership.

PROCEEDINGS OF COMMITTEES TO BE CONFIDENTIAL

All agendas, reports and other documents which are marked "not for publication" because they contain confidential information shall not be published or any information contained therein made available to any member of the public or press.

CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES

The number of standing committees, sub committees, tasks groups and panels and their membership shall be such as the assembly may from time to time determine.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

- Every committee shall, at its first meeting, and before proceeding with its business, elect a chairman a vice-chairman for the year.
- In the absence from a meeting of the chairman and vice chairman of the committee, a chairman for that meeting may be elected.
- Whenever the chairman or vice-chairman of a committee or sub-committee shall cease to hold office the vacancy shall be filled at the next appropriate meeting of the committee or sub-committee.
- All committees and sub-committees of the assembly which consist of members of the assembly and other persons shall have a member of the assembly as chairman.

SPECIAL MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES

- The chairman of the committee or the chairman of assembly may call a special meeting of the committee at any time. A special meeting shall also be called on the requisition of a quarter of the whole number of the committee but in no case shall less than three members requisition a special meeting.
- In the event of an emergency or special circumstances, the chief executive may summon a special meeting of any committee. The summons to the special meeting shall set out the business to be considered and no business other than that set out in the summons shall be considered at the meeting.
- The chairman and vice-chairmen of assembly are authorised to convene a joint meeting of two or more committees or sub-committees to deal with any matter of urgency and such joint meetings shall have delegated power to act on the assembly behalf in such matters.

SUB COMMITTEES

- Every committee appointed by the assembly may appoint Sub-committees for purposes to be specified by the committee.
- The chairman and the vice-chairmen shall be member(s) of every sub-committee appointed by the committee, unless they signify to the committee that they do not wish to serve or where the terms of reference to sub-committees signify otherwise.

QUORUM OF COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES

- Except where authorised by the assembly business shall not be transacted at a meeting of any committee unless at least one quarter of the whole number of the committee is present, provided that in no case the quorum of the committee shall be less than three members.
- Except as aforesaid or otherwise ordered by the committee that has appointed it, business shall not be transacted at a sub committee unless at least one quarter of the whole number of the sub committee is present, provided that in no case shall the quorum of sub committee be less than two members.

VOTING IN COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

- Voting at a meeting of a committee or sub committee shall be by a show of hands, unless requested by majority resolution that it shall be by ballot.
- The chairman shall ascertain the numbers voting for or against any question and the chairman's declaration as to the result shall be conclusive.

RECORDING OF VOTES-COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES

The provision of standing order 27 shall be deemed as applying to committees and sub committees of the assembly.

DELEGATED POWERS - REFERENCE TO ASSEMBLY

Immediately following a vote on a decision under delegated powers, one quarter of the members present and voting at the meeting may require that the decision taken be submitted to the assembly as a recommendation. In such circumstances the decision shall not be actioned before consideration of that recommendation by assembly.

STANDING ORDERS TO APPLY TO COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

The standing orders of the assembly shall generally apply to committee and sub-committee meetings.

FORMULATION AND CHANGES OF POLICY AND EXPENDITURE

Unless otherwise provided for the approved terms of reference, no resolution of a committee or sub committee which would have a significant impact upon the resources of the Council and Association shall be submitted to the assembly unless it has first been submitted to the management board; provided that with the approval of the Chairman of the management board such a resolution or recommendation may be submitted direct to assembly if the urgency of the situation so requires.

VARIATION OR REVOCATION OF STANDING ORDER

Any motion to change or revoke the Standing Orders shall, when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next meeting of the management board, which shall formulate any necessary recommendations to the Council.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Any standing order may be suspended by a majority decision of members present and voting so far as is necessary to enable a particular item of business to be transacted.

A motion to suspend standing orders shall not be moved without notice unless at least one half of the whole number of the members of the assembly or the committee are present.

CONSTRUCTION

References in these Standing Orders to the masculine gender shall include the feminine; and the singular shall include the plural and vice versa.