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# HANKELOW PARISH COUNCIL

## STANDING ORDERS (2025 Revision)

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**Based on the NALC Model Standing Orders (2025 Edition)**

**Adopted on: 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

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**Approved by: Hankelow Parish Council**

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This document outlines the procedures and governance arrangements to be observed by Hankelow Parish Council in accordance with best practice and applicable legislation.

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## 1. Meetings

1.1 All meetings shall be open to the public unless their exclusion is lawful and has been resolved by the Council.

1.2 Members of the public may submit written questions in advance or speak during the public participation session.

- Each speaker may address the Council for **up to 5 minutes**.
- The **total duration** of public participation shall be **at the discretion of the Chair**.
- Questions shall not start a debate.
- The Chair may direct that a written or oral response be provided after the meeting.
- The Clerk may decline to read out written questions containing defamatory, offensive, or inappropriate content.

1.3 Minutes shall record **only** that a member of the public spoke, not the detail of their comments.

1.4 Recording or broadcasting of meetings is permitted provided it does not disrupt proceedings. The Chair may require recording to cease if it becomes intrusive or obstructive.

1.5 All remarks during debate must be addressed to the Chair.

- Personal remarks or naming individuals unnecessarily is prohibited.

- The Chair may stop a speaker who strays into irrelevance and invite them to return to the point.
- If no new points are being raised, the Chair may seek consent to put the matter to the vote.

1.6 The quorum for Full Council shall be **three members**.

1.7 A meeting shall not exceed **3 hours** unless the Council resolves to extend it.

## 2. Ordinary Council Meetings

2.1 The Annual Meeting shall be held in May on a date determined by the Council.

2.2 The first business of the Annual Meeting shall be the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

2.3 The schedule of ordinary meetings shall be approved annually.

## 3. Proper Officer

3.1 The Clerk shall serve as the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer unless the Council appoints otherwise.

3.2 The Proper Officer shall:

- Issue meeting summons and agendas
- Handle correspondence
- Maintain records
- Advise the Council on procedural and legal matters
- Act impartially and independently

3.3 The Clerk is not a personal secretary to councillors. Instructions may only be given by resolution of the Council.

## 4. Motions Requiring Written Notice

4.1 Motions must be submitted in writing to the Proper Officer at least **5 clear days** before the meeting.

4.2 The Proper Officer may correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors.

## 5. Motions Not Requiring Written Notice

5.1 Motions may be moved without notice to:

- Correct minutes
- Change the order of business
- Refer business to a committee

- Move to a vote
- Adjourn or close the meeting
- Exclude the press and public
- Suspend Standing Orders (except those required by law)

## 6. Rules of Debate

6.1 A motion shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded.

6.2 Only one amendment may be debated at a time.

6.3 The Chair shall rule on procedural matters and may close debate when the matter has been sufficiently discussed.

6.4 All contributions must relate strictly to the matter under discussion.

## 7. Code of Conduct

7.1 All councillors must observe the adopted Code of Conduct.

7.2 Councillors must declare disclosable pecuniary interests and withdraw from the meeting where required.

7.3 Councillors are personally responsible for declaring interests. The Chair may remind members of potential interests but cannot compel disclosure.

## 8. Minutes

8.1 Draft minutes shall be confirmed at the next meeting and signed by the Chair.

8.2 Corrections must be proposed as motions.

8.3 Minutes must be self-contained and understandable without reference to other documents.

8.4 Minutes shall not include verbatim extracts of letters or emails.

8.5 "Matters Arising" shall be used only for updates, not new decisions.

8.6 The Clerk has professional responsibility for the accuracy and presentation of minutes.

## 9. Disorderly Conduct

9.1 No person may obstruct or disrupt the meeting.

9.2 The Chair may warn an interrupter that they will be removed if they continue.

9.3 If the warning is ignored, the Council shall resolve **without discussion** that the person be excluded.

## 10. Rescission of Previous Resolutions

10.1 A resolution shall not be reversed within six months unless:

- A special motion is submitted in writing and signed by at least **three councillors**, or
- It is recommended by a committee.

10.2 A matter already decided at a meeting shall not be reopened at the same meeting.

## 11. Voting on Appointments / Casual Vacancies

11.1 Voting shall be by show of hands unless the Council resolves otherwise.

11.2 Where more than two candidates are nominated, elimination rounds shall be used until one candidate receives a majority.

11.3 In the event of a tie:

- The Chair may exercise a casting vote.
- If the casting vote has already been used and a tie remains, the appointment shall be decided by **the toss of a coin**.

## 12. Expenditure

12.1 All expenditure must comply with the Council's Financial Regulations.

12.2 Emergency payments may be authorised by the Clerk following consultation with the Chair or Vice-Chair.

## 13. Execution and Sealing of Legal Deeds

13.1 Legal deeds shall be authorised by resolution and signed by **two councillors**.

## 14. Committees and Sub-Committees

14.1 The Council may appoint standing or temporary committees.

14.2 The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council shall be **ex-officio members** of all committees and sub-committees.

14.3 Substitute members may be appointed where notice is given to the Clerk at least **2 days** before the meeting.

## 15. Extraordinary Meetings

15.1 The Chair may convene an extraordinary meeting at any time.

15.2 If the Chair refuses or fails to call a meeting within 7 days of a written request, **any two councillors** may convene the meeting.

## 16. Advisory Committees

16.1 Advisory committees may include non-councillors.

16.2 They may make recommendations but not binding decisions.

## 17. Accounts and Financial Statements

17.1 Quarterly and annual financial statements shall be presented to the Council.

17.2 The Council shall comply with internal and external audit requirements.

## 18. Financial Controls and Procurement

18.1 Contracts exceeding **£50,000** shall follow formal tender procedures.

18.2 Contracts exceeding the prevailing **Public Contracts Regulations threshold** shall comply with statutory procurement rules.

18.3 The Council is not obliged to accept the lowest tender but must minute the reasons for its decision.

## 19. Canvassing and Recommendations

19.1 Canvassing for appointments is prohibited.

19.2 Councillors may not solicit appointments but may submit testimonials when requested.

## 20. Inspection of Documents

20.1 Councillors may inspect Council documents where necessary for official duties.

## 21. Unauthorised Activities

21.1 No councillor shall inspect land, issue instructions, or act on behalf of the Council without proper authorisation.

## 22. Confidential Business

22.1 Confidential matters shall be considered in private session following a lawful resolution.

22.2 Decisions taken in confidential session must still be minuted.

## 23. General Power of Competence

23.1 The Council may resolve eligibility in accordance with statutory criteria.

## 24. Matters Affecting Council Employees

24.1 Staffing matters shall be handled with confidentiality and impartiality.

24.2 Councillors may not direct employees individually; instructions must be agreed collectively.

## 25. Freedom of Information

25.1 FOI requests shall be handled in accordance with statutory guidance.

25.2 Correspondence from the Information Commissioner shall be shared with the Chair.

## 26. Press and Media

26.1 The Clerk shall act as the primary point of contact unless the Council resolves otherwise.

## 27. Liaison with Borough Councillors

27.1 Borough councillors shall receive agendas and relevant correspondence.

## 28. Financial Matters

28.1 Procurement rules apply for contracts above £50,000.

28.2 Statutory procurement thresholds shall be observed.

## 29. Requests for Dispensations

29.1 Written requests for dispensations shall be considered at the next available meeting.

## 30. Revocation and Suspension

30.1 Standing Orders may be suspended by resolution except those required by law.

## 31. Distribution and Enforcement

31.1 Standing Orders shall be provided to each councillor upon taking office.

31.2 Persistent disregard of Standing Orders may result in exclusion from meetings.