

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS 2018

**These Standing Orders were
adopted by
Mountfield Parish Council
At their Annual Meeting
on 8th May 2018**

**Items in bold type indicate a legal
requirement**

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Index of Standing Orders

	PAGE
Introduction	3
1. Rules of debate at Meetings	4
2. Disorderly conduct at Meetings	5
3. Meetings generally	5
4. Committees and Sub-committees	7
5. Ordinary Council Meetings	7
6. Extraordinary Meetings of the Council, Committees and Sub-committees	8
7. Previous Resolutions	8
8. Voting on Appointments	9
9. Motions for a Meeting that require written notice to be given to the Proper Officer	9
10. Motions at a Meeting that do not require written notice	9
11. Management of Information	9
12. Draft Minutes	10
13. Code of Conduct and Dispensations	10
14. Code of Conduct Complaints	11
15. Proper Officer	11
16. Responsible Financial Officer	12
17. Accounts and Accounting Statements	12
18. Financial Controls and Procurement	12
19. Handling Staff Matters	12
20. Responsibilities to provide information	13
21. Responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation	13
22. Relations with the Press/Media	13
23. Execution and Sealing of Legal Deeds	13
24. Communications with District and County or Unitary Councillors	13
25. Restrictions on Councillor Activities	13
26. Standing Orders generally	14

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

INTRODUCTION

These model standing orders update the National Association of Local Council (NALC) model standing orders contained in "Local Councils Explained" by Meera Tharmarajah (© 2013 NALC). This publication contains new model standing orders which reference new legislation introduced after 2013 when the last model standing orders were published.

HOW TO USE MODEL STANDING ORDERS

Standing orders are the written rules of a local council. Standing orders are essential to regulate the proceedings of a meeting. A council may also use standing orders to confirm or refer to various internal organisational and administrative arrangements. The standing orders of a council are not the same as the policies of a council but standing orders may refer to them.

Local councils operate within a wide statutory framework. NALC model standing orders incorporate and reference many statutory requirements to which councils are subject. It is not possible for the model standing orders to contain or reference all the statutory or legal requirements which apply to local councils. For example, it is not practical for model standing orders to document all obligations under data protection legislation. The statutory requirements to which a council is subject apply whether or not they are incorporated in a council's standing orders.

The model 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. The financial regulations, as opposed to the standing orders of a council, include most of the requirements relevant to the council's Responsible Financial Officer. Model financial regulations are available to councils in membership of NALC.

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

1. RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS
 - a. 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.
 - b. A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
 - c. A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
 - d. 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.
 - e. An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.
 - f. 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.
 - g. 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.
 - h. 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.
 - i. 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.
 - j. Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chairman of the meeting.
 - k. 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.
 - l. A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.
 - m. The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of the debate on it.
 - n. 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 the debate on the first amendment or at the very end of the debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.
 - o. Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except -
 - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
 - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since they last spoke;
 - iii. to make a point of order;
 - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
 - v. to exercise a right of reply.
 - p. 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 they consider has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting they are concerned by.
 - q. A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and their decision shall be final.
 - r. When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except -
 - i. to amend the motion;
 - ii. to proceed to the next business;
 - iii. to adjourn the debate;
 - iv. to put a motion to a vote;
 - v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;
 - vii. to exclude the public and press;
 - viii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

- s. 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.
 - t. 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.
2. DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS
- a. 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.
 - b. If person(s) disregard the request of the chairman of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor of 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.
 - c. 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.
3. MEETINGS GENERALLY
- a. **Full Council meetings - 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 a reasonable cost.**
 - b. **Full Council meetings - the minimum 3 clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the 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 for public thanksgiving or mourning.**
 - c. **Committee meetings – the minimum 3 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.**
 - d. **Full Council meetings/Committee meetings – 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 resolution which shall give reasons for the public’s exclusion.**
 - e. 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.
 - f. The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(e) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the chairman of the meeting.
 - g. Subject to standing order 3(f), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 5 minutes.
 - h. Subject to standing order 3(e), 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.
 - i. A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort).
 - j. A person who speaks at meeting shall direct their comments to the chairman of the meeting.
 - k. 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.

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

- l. Full Council meetings/Committee meetings – subject to standing order 3(m), 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.**
- m. Full Council meetings/Committee meetings – a person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**
- n. Full Council meetings/Committee meetings – 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.**
- o. 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 their absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman of the Council.**
- p. The Chairman of the Council, if present, shall preside at the 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.**
- q. Full Council meetings/Committee meetings/Sub-committee meetings – subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors present and voting.**
- r. Full Council meetings/Committee meetings/Sub-committee meetings – 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 their casting vote whether or not they give an original vote.**
See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chairman to the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.
- s. Full Council meetings – unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting give their vote for or against the question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.**
- t. The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following –**
 - i. the time and place of the meeting;**
 - ii. the names of the councillors who are present and the names of the councillors who are absent;**
 - iii. interests that have been declared by councillors;**
 - iv. the grant of dispensations, if any, to councillors;**
 - v. whether a councillor left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;**
 - vi. if there was a public participation session; and**
 - vii. the resolutions made.**
- u. Full Council meetings/Committee meetings/Sub-committee meetings – a councillor who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or other 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 their right to participate and vote on that matter.**
- v. Full Council meetings – 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 three.**
See standing order 4d(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

- w. **Full Council meetings/Committee meetings/Sub-committee meetings – if a meeting 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.
 - x. The council to make all efforts to ensure that a meeting does not exceed a period of 2 hours.
4. COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES
- a. **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**
 - b. **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**
 - c. **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**
 - d. The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and -
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;
 - iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;
 - iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;
 - v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer 3 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;
 - vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint a chairman of the standing committee;
 - vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chairman at the first meeting of the committee;
 - viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be on less than three;
 - ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;
 - x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;
 - xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and
 - xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.
5. ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS
- a. **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.**
 - b. **In a year which is not an election year, the annual meeting of the Council shall be held on such a day in May as the Council decides.**
 - c. **The annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 7.30pm.**
 - d. **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.**
 - e. **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council**

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

- f. **The Chairman of the Council, unless they have resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
 - g. **The Vice-Chairman of the Council, unless they have resigned or become disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
 - h. **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they 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.**
 - i. **In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and shall give a casting vote in case of equality of votes.**
 - j. Following the election of the Chairman to the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include -
 - i. **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 their acceptance of office form, unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**
 - ii. Approval of the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements for the previous financial year;
 - iii. Review and adoption/re-adoption of appropriate standing orders, financial regulations and other policies/procedures;
 - iv. Review of inventory and land and other assets, including buildings and office equipment;
 - v. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
 - vi. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligation under freedom of information and data protection legislation;
See also standing orders 11, 20 and 21
 - vii. Review of the Council's expenditure under s137 of the Local Government Act.
6. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL
- a. **The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**
 - b. **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 by the two councillors.**
7. PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS
- a. A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least two 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 sub-committee.
 - b. 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.

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

8. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS
 - a. Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons have 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.

9. MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROPER OFFICER
 - a. 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.
 - b. 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 seven clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
 - c. The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda is final.

10. MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE
 - a. The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer -
 - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
 - ii. to move to a vote;
 - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
 - iv. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
 - v. to change the order of business on the agenda;
 - vi. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
 - vii. to require a written report;
 - viii. to extend the time limits for speaking;
 - ix. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
 - x. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
 - xi. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
 - xii. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
 - xiii. to adjourn the meeting; or
 - xiv. to close the meeting.

11. MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

See also standing order 20

 - a. **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.**
 - b. **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 for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g. the Limitation Act 1980).**
 - c. **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.**
 - d. **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

12. DRAFT MINUTES

- a. 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.
- b. 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).
- c. 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 meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.
- d. 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 this 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.”
- e. **If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is the higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website that is publicly accessible and free of charge, not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**
- f. 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)

- a. All councillors shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.
- b. Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest. They may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which they had the interest.
- c. **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.
- d. A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer and that decision is final.
- e. A dispensation request shall confirm –
 - i. the description and the nature of the disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest to which the request for the dispensation relates;
 - ii. whether the dispensation is required to participate at a meeting in a discussion only or a discussion and a vote;
 - iii. the date of the meeting or the period (not exceeding four years) for which the dispensation is sought; and
 - iv. an explanation as to why the dispensation is sought.
- f. 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.
- g. **A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 13(a) if having regard to all relevant circumstances any of the following apply –**
 - i. **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.**
 - ii. **granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area; or**
 - iii. **it is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.**

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

14. CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS
- a. Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor has breached the Council's Code of Conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order 11, report this to the Council.
 - b. 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 the Council of this fact,
 - c. The Council may –
 - i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;
 - ii. seek information relevant to the complaint or the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter.
 - d. **Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a councillor has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**
15. PROPER OFFICER
- a. The Proper Officer shall be the clerk.
 - b. The Proper Officer shall –
 - i. **at least three 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, place and the agenda (provided that the councillor has consented to service by email); and**
 - **provide, in a conspicuous place, public notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them.**

See standing order 3(b) for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council.
 - ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least seven days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it;
 - iii. **convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in this office;**
 - iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**
 - v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**
 - vi. hold acceptance of office forms for councillors;
 - vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
 - viii. 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;
 - ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer;
 - x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
 - xi. 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);
 - xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
(see also standing order 23)
 - xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
 - xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
 - xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme.

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

16. RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER
- a. The Council shall appoint a suitable person to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.
17. ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS
- a. "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners' Guide".
- b. All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.
- c. The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply each councillor as soon as practicable after 30th June, 30th September and 31st December in each year a statement to summarise –
- i. the Council's receipts and payments for each quarter;
- ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments for the year to date;
- iii. 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.
- d. As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31st March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide –
- i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and
- ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 1 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.
- e. 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) for the year to 31st 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 may be subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30th June.
18. FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT
- a. The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Responsible Financial Officer, which shall include detailed arrangements for –
- i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;
- ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council
- iii. the work of the independent auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;
- iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payment; and
- v. whether contracts with an estimated value below **£25,000** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.
- b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.
19. HANDLING STAFF MATTERS
- a. A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of the Council is subject to standing order 11.
- b. 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.

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

20. RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION
See also standing order 21
- a. **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.**
 - b. **The Council shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Smaller Authorities (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.**
21. RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION
(Below is not an exclusive list)
See also standing order 11
- a. **The Council shall appoint a Data Protection Officer.**
 - b. **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data.**
 - c. **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**
 - d. **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.**
 - e. **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.**
 - f. **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**
22. RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA
- a. 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.
23. EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS
See also standing orders 15(b)(vii) and (xvii)
- a. A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
 - b. **Subject to standing order 23(a), any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**
24. COMMUNICATING WITH DISTRICT AND COUNTY OR UNITARY COUNCILLORS
- a. 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.
 - b. Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to the District and County Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.
25. RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES
- a. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall -
 - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
 - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

MOUNTFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

26. STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY
 - a. 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.
 - b. A motion to add or to 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 two councillors, to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9.
 - c. The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.
 - d. The decision of the chairman of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.