Edenham, Grimsthorpe, Elsthorpe, & Scottlethorpe Parish Council

Standing Orders

At its meeting held on Tuesday 8th September 2026

(Agenda Item 3/14/1),

the Parish Council agreed to adopt the

Model Standing Orders.

Notes

Model standing orders that are in **bold type** contain legal and statutory requirements. National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommends that the council adopts them without changing them or their meaning.

For convenience, the word "councillor" is used in model standing orders and, unless the context suggests otherwise, includes a non-councillor with or without voting rights.

1. Parish Council Meetings

Parish council meetings shall take place six times a year, usually on the second Tuesday of the designated month, commencing at 7:30pm in Edenham Village Hall.

a Meeting months are May, July, September, November, January and March. This order of meeting follows the financial year.

b The meeting in May is the annual parish council meeting which covers the financial information from the previous financial year including the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

c Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the Chair of the meeting.

d **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.**

e **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning.**

f **Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.**

g A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct his comments to the Chair of the meeting.

h Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the Chair of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking

i **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.

j **A person present at a meeting may not provide an oral report or oral commentary about a meeting as it takes place without permission.**

k **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.**

l **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chair of the Council may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one).**

m **The Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one) if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**

n **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**

o **The Chair of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.**

p **See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chair of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.**

q **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 gave their vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

r The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

i. The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

ii. the time and place of the meeting.

iii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent.

iv. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights.

v. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights.

vi. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting

rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered.

vii. if there was a public participation session; and

viii. the resolutions made.

ix. A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2.5 hours

2. 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.**

3. 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 day in May as the Council decides.**

c **If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.**

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 Chair and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council.**

f **The Chair of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**

g **The Vice-Chair of the Council, if there is one, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chair of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**

h **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chair of the Council has been elected. The current Chair of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of**

the election of the new Chair 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 Chair of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chair of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

j Following the election of the Chair of the Council and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:

i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chair 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 Chair of the Council of his acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**

ii. **Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.**

4. Extraordinary meetings of the council, committees and sub-committees

a **The Chair of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**

b **If the Chair 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.**

5. 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 has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the Chair of the meeting.

6. Management of information

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.**

7. 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 Chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.

d **If the Council's gross annual income or expenditure (whichever is higher) does not exceed £25,000, it shall publish draft minutes on a website which is publicly accessible and free of charge not later than one month after the meeting has taken place.**

e Following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

8. Code of conduct and dispensations

a All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.

b Dispensation requests should be raised at the start of the parish council meeting. This will be recorded in the minutes, along with the agenda item.

c Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has a disclosable pecuniary interest. He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.

d Unless they have been granted a dispensation, a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights shall withdraw from a meeting when it is considering a matter in which he has another interest if required by the Council's code of conduct.

He may return to the meeting after it has considered the matter in which he had the interest.

e **A dispensation may be granted 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.**

9. Code of conduct complaints

a **Upon notification by the Principal Council that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against them. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.**

10. Proper officer

a 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 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).**

ii. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**

iii. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**

iv. Hold acceptance of office forms from councillors.

v. Hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests.

vi. 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.

vii. Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.

viii. 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),

ix. Arrange for legal deeds to be executed.

x. Arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations.

xi. Refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chair or in his absence the Vice-Chair of the Council to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

xii. Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority using the District Councils notification system.

xiii. Manage information about the Council on the council website.

11. Responsible financial officer (RFO)

a In the long-term absence of the RFO the Council shall appoint an appropriate person to undertake the work. This person must be independent of the parish council members.

12. 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 a summary of the income and expenditures and bank account(s) balances to the councillors during each Parish Council meeting.

d As soon as possible after the financial year end 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:

i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last quarter and the year to date for information; and

ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of

Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.

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, or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

13. 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 in respect of the following:

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 internal 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 payments; and

b. Financial regulations shall be reviewed at least annually for fitness of purpose.

c. **Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Government from time to time, the Council must consider whether the contract is subject to the requirements of the current procurement legislation and, if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. NALC's procurement guidance contains further guidance.**

14. Responsibilities to provide information.

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.**

15. Responsibilities under data protection legislation

a **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his personal data.**

b **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**

c **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.**

d **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.**

e **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

16. 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.

17. Execution and sealing of legal deeds.

a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.

b **Any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.**

The above is applicable to a Council without a common seal.

18. Communicating with district and county or unitary councillors

a The meeting dates and an invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) of the District and County Council OR Unitary Council representing the area of the Council on an annual basis.

19. 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.

20. 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 to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least **two** councillors to be given to the Proper Officer.

c The council's approved standing order document is available on the council website.

d The decision of the Chair of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

© NALC 2020. All rights are reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or used for commercial purposes without the written permission of NALC save that councils in membership of NALC have permission to edit and use the model standing orders in this publication for their governance purposes.

The Model Standing Orders 2018 for England were revised in 2020