

Copplestone Parish Council

Standing Orders – 2024

NOTE: Standing orders in **bold type** are those required by legislation and should not be substantively amended unless the legislation out of which they are born changes.

1. Meetings

- a **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. Meetings of Copplestone Parish Council shall therefore be held at The Village Hall at 7.30pm unless otherwise decided.**

- b **The minimum three 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 OR [The minimum three clear days public notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting.**

- c **When calculating the 3 clear days for notice of a meeting to councillors and the public, 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 shall not count.**

- d **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. – See Appendix I**

- e **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 3.**

- f **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be adjourned. Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be transacted at a following meeting.**

- g In Accordance with the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 (“the 2014 Regulations”) a person may not orally report or comment about a meeting as it takes place if he is present at the meeting of a parish council or its committees but otherwise may:
- a) film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting.
 - b) use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later.
 - c) report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting.
- h **The press shall be provided reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**
- i **Subject to standing orders, which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chairman may in his absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chairman.**
- j **The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman 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.**
- k **The Chairman 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.**
(See also standing orders 2 (i) and (j) below.)
- l **Voting on any 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 his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.**
- m **The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent.**

- n If prior to a meeting, a Councillor has submitted reasons for his absence at the meeting, which is then approved by a resolution, such resolution shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the approval was given.
- o The Code of Conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to Councillors in respect of the entire meeting.**
- p A Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, and any other interest laid down in Schedule 2 of the Code of Conduct is required to be disclosed by a Councillor at a meeting and shall be recorded in the Minutes. (See also standing orders 7 and 8 below.)**
- q Meetings shall not exceed a period of 2 hours

2. Ordinary Council meetings

See also standing order 1 above.

- a In an election year, the Annual Parish Meeting of the Council shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the new councillors elected take office.**
- b In a year, which is not an election year, the Annual Parish Meeting of a Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council may direct.**
- c If no other time is fixed, the Annual Parish Meeting of the Council shall take place at 7.00 pm.**
- d In addition to the Annual Parish Meeting of the Council, at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council directs.**
- e The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council shall be the first business completed at the Annual Parish Meeting of the Council.**
- f The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the Annual Parish Meeting until his successor is elected at the next Annual Parish Meeting of the Council.**

- g The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next Annual Parish 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, he shall preside at the 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 must 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, he shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**
- j Following the election of the Chairman of the Council and Vice-Chairman of the Council at the Annual Parish Meeting of the Council, the order of business shall be as follows.**

 - i. In an election year, delivery by councillors of their declarations of acceptance of office.
 - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council.
 - iii. If required Review of any delegation arrangements to committees, the Clerk and other local authorities.
 - iv. Review of the terms of references for any committees.
 - v. Receipt of nominations to existing committees.
 - vi. Appointment of any new committees, confirmation of the terms of reference, the number of members (including, if appropriate, substitute councillors) and receipt of nominations to them.
 - vii. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations.
 - viii. Review of arrangements, including any charters, with other local authorities and review of contributions made to expenditure incurred by other local authorities.
 - ix. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for

reporting back.

- x. Review of inventory of land and assets.
- xi. Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.
- xii. Review of the Council's and the Clerk's memberships of other bodies.
- xiii. Establishing or reviewing the Council's complaints procedure.
- xiv. Establishing or reviewing the Council's procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998.
- xv. Establishing or reviewing the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media.

3. Proper Officer

- a The Council's Proper Officer shall be the Clerk. The Clerk shall fulfil the duties assigned to the Proper Officer in standing orders.
- b The Council's Clerk shall do the following.
 - i. Sign and serve on councillors by delivery, email or post at their residences a summons confirming the time, date, venue and the agenda of a meeting of the Council and a meeting of a committee at least 3 clear days before the meeting.
 - ii. Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).
 - iii. Subject to standing orders 4(a)–(e) below, include in the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at least 3 days before the meeting confirming his withdrawal of it.
 - iv. Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office, in accordance with standing order [3(b)i above.
 - v. Make available for inspection the minutes of meetings.
 - vi. Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities.
 - vii. Receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office from councillors.
 - viii. Retain a copy of every councillor's register of interests and any changes to it and

keep copies of the same available for inspection.

- ix. Keep proper records required before and after meetings.
- x. Process all requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998, in accordance with and subject to the Council's procedures relating to the same.
- xi. Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary.
- xii. Manage the organisation, storage of and access to information held by the Council in paper and electronic form.
- xiii. Arrange for legal deeds to be signed by 2 councillors and witnessed.
- xiv. Arrange for the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.
- xv. 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. Refer a planning application received by the Council to the Chairman or in his absence the Vice-Chairman of the Council within 5 working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of [the Council.
- xvii. Action or undertake activity or responsibilities instructed by resolution or contained in standing orders.

4. Motions requiring written notice.

- a No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Council's Clerk at least 5 clear days before the next meeting.
- b The Clerk may, before including a motion in the agenda correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.
- c If the Clerk considers the wording of a motion received is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it in writing to the Clerk in clear and certain language at least 3 clear days before the meeting.

- d If the wording or nature of a proposed motion is considered unlawful or improper, the Clerk shall consult with the Chairman of the forthcoming meeting or the Councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included or rejected in the agenda.
- e Having consulted the Chairman or councillors pursuant to standing order 4(d) above, the decision of the Clerk as to whether or not to include the motion in the agenda shall be final.
- f Every motion rejected in accordance with the Council's standing orders shall be duly recorded with a note by the Clerk giving reasons for its rejection.
- g Every motion and resolution shall relate to the Council's statutory functions, powers and lawful obligations or shall relate to an issue, which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.

5. Motions not requiring written notice.

- a Motions in respect of the following matters may be moved without written notice.
 - i. To appoint a person to preside at a meeting.
 - ii. To approve the absences of councillors.
 - iii. To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - iv. To correct an inaccuracy in the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - v. To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
 - vi. To alter the order of business on the agenda for reasons of urgency or expedience.
 - vii. To proceed to the next business on the agenda.
 - viii. To close or adjourn debate.
 - ix. To refer by formal delegation a matter to a committee or to the Clerk.
 - x. To appoint a committee or any councillors (including substitutes) thereto.
 - xi. To receive nominations to a committee.
 - xii. To dissolve a committee.

- xiii. To note the minutes of a meeting of a committee.
 - xiv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by a committee or the Clerk.
 - xv. To consider a report and/or recommendations made by the Clerk, professional advisor, expert or consultant.
 - xvi. To authorise legal deeds signed by the Chairman and Clerks and witnessed.
 - xvii. To authorise the payment of monies up to £ 5,000.
 - xviii. To amend a motion relevant to the original or substantive motion under consideration which shall not have the effect of nullifying it.
 - xix. To extend the time limit for speeches.
 - xx. To exclude the press and public for all or part of a meeting.
 - xxi. To silence or exclude from the meeting a Councillor or a member of the public for disorderly conduct.
 - xxii. To give the consent of the Council if such consent is required by standing orders.
 - xxiii. To suspend any standing order except those which are mandatory by law.**
 - xxiv. To adjourn the meeting.
 - xxv. To appoint representatives to outside bodies and to decide for those representatives to report back the activities of outside bodies.
 - xxvi. To answer questions from councillors.
- b If a motion falls within the terms of reference of a committee or within the delegated powers conferred on the Clerk, a referral of the same may be made to such committee or the Clerk provided that the Chairman may direct for it to be dealt with at the present meeting for reasons of urgency or expedience.

6. Rules of debate

- a Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chairman's direction for reasons of expedience.
- b A motion shall not be considered unless it has been proposed and seconded.
- c A motion included in an agenda not moved by the councillor who tabled it, may be

treated as withdrawn.

- d A motion to amend an original or substantive motion shall not be considered unless proper notice has been given after the original or substantive motion has been seconded and notice of such amendment, shall, if required by the Chairman, be reduced to writing and handed to the Chairman who shall determine the order in which they are considered.
- e A Councillor may move amendments to his own motion. If a motion has already been seconded, an amendment to it shall be with the consent of the seconder.
- f Any amendment to a motion shall be either:
 - i. to leave out words.
 - ii. to add words.
 - iii. to leave out words and add other words.
- g A proposed or carried amendment to a motion shall not have the effect of rescinding the original or substantive motion under consideration.
- h Only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the Chairman. No further amendment to a motion shall be moved until the previous amendment has been disposed of.
- i Subject to Standing Order 6(h) above, one or more amendments may be discussed together if the Chairman considers this expedient but shall be voted upon separately.
- j Pursuant to standing order 6(h) above, the number of amendments to an original or substantive motion, which may be moved by a councillor, is limited to one.
- k If an amendment is not carried, other amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the Chairman.
- l If an amendment is carried, the original motion, as amended, shall take the place of the original motion, and shall become the substantive motion upon which any further

amendment may be moved.

- m The mover of a motion or the mover of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 5 minutes.
- n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply in respect of the substantive motion at the very end of debate and immediately before it is put to the vote.
- o A councillor may not speak further in respect of any one motion except to speak once on an amendment moved by another councillor or to make a point of order or to give a personal explanation.
- p During the debate of 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 he considers has been breached, or specify the irregularity in the meeting he is concerned by.
- q A point of order shall be decided by the Chairman and his decision shall be final.
- r With the consent of the seconder and/or of the meeting, a motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer. A councillor shall not speak upon the said motion or amendment unless permission for the withdrawal of the motion or amendment has been refused.
- s Subject to standing order 6(o) above, when a councillor's 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 the motion to a vote.
 - v. to ask a person to be silent or for him to leave the meeting.
 - vi. to refer a motion to a committee for consideration.
 - vii. to exclude the public and press.

- viii. to adjourn the meeting.
- ix. to suspend any standing order, except those, which are mandatory.

t In respect of standing order 6(s)(iv) above, the Chairman shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote. The Chairman shall call upon the mover of the motion under debate to exercise or waive his right of reply and shall put the motion to the vote after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the meeting shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

7. Code of conduct

- a. The Code of Conduct as required by Section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 has been adopted by the Council and all councillors shall observe this code.**
- b. All councillors shall undertake training within 6 months of the delivery of their declaration of acceptance of office.
- c. Councillors who have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in an Agenda item are to declare it and are to withdraw from the room.**
- d. Councillors with an Interest under Schedule 2 of the Code of Conduct are to declare it. They may then continue to participate in the business.**

8. Questions

- a A councillor may seek an answer to a question concerning any business of the Council provided 2 clear days notice of the question has been given to the Clerk.
- b Questions not related to items of business on the agenda for a meeting shall only be asked during the part of the meeting set aside for such questions.
- c Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

9. Minutes

- a If a copy of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting has been circulated to councillors no later than the day of service of the summons to attend the scheduled meeting they shall be taken as read.
- b No discussion of the draft minutes of a preceding meeting shall take place except in relation to their accuracy.
- c Minutes, including any amendment to correct their accuracy, 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 majority of the () and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings.”
- e Upon a resolution, which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, any previous draft minutes or recordings of the meeting shall be destroyed.

10. Disorderly conduct

- a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly.
- b If, in the opinion of the Chairman, there has been a breach of standing order 10(a) above, the Chairman shall express that opinion and thereafter any councillor (including

the Chairman) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion.

- c If a resolution made in accordance with standing order 10(b) above, is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and/or he may adjourn the meeting.

11. Rescission of previous resolutions

- a A resolution (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within 6 months except either by a special motion, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least 2 councillors of the Council, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a committee.
- b When a special motion or any other motion moved pursuant to standing order 11(a) above has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved within a further 6 months.

12. Voting on appointments

- a Where more than 2 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. Any tie may be settled by the Chairman's casting vote.

13. Expenditure

- a Any expenditure incurred by the Council shall be in accordance with the Council's financial regulations.

- b **The Council's financial regulations shall be reviewed once a year.**

- c **The Council's financial regulations may make provision for the authorisation of the payment of money in exercise of any of the Council's functions to be delegated to a committee, or to the Clerk.**

14 Execution and sealing of legal deeds.

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

- b The Clerk and Chairman must sign on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law with two witnesses their signatures.

15 Committees

- a The Council may, at its Annual Parish Meeting, appoint standing committees and may at any other time appoint such other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - i. shall determine their terms of reference.
 - ii. may permit committees to determine the dates of their meetings.
 - iii. shall appoint and determine the term of office of councillor or non-councillor members of such a committee (unless the appointment of non-councillors is prohibited by law) so as to hold office no later than the next Annual Parish Meeting.
 - iv. may appoint substitute councillors to a committee whose role is to replace ordinary councillors at a meeting of a committee if ordinary councillors of the committee have confirmed to the Clerk 3 days before the meeting that they are unable to attend.
 - v. an ordinary member of a committee who has been replaced at a meeting by a substitute member (in accordance with standing order 15(a)(iv) above) shall not be permitted to participate in debate or vote on business at that meeting and may only speak during any public participation session during the meeting.

vi. may in accordance with standing orders, dissolve a committee at any time.

16. Extraordinary meetings

See also standing order 1 above.

- 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 or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within 7 days of having been requested to do so by two councillors, those two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue, and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.**

- c The Chairman of a committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee at any time.

- d If the Chairman of a committee does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting within 2 days of having been requested by to do so by 2 councillors, those 2 councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of a committee. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue, and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by 2 councillors.

17. Advisory committees

- a The Council may appoint advisory committees comprised of a number of councillors and non-councillors.

- b Advisory committees may consist wholly of persons who are non-councillors.

18. Accounts and Financial Statement

- a All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved, and paid in accordance with the Council's financial regulations, which shall be reviewed at least annually.
- b The Clerk shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments for each quarter and the balances held at the end of a quarter. This statement should include a comparison with the budget for the financial year. A Financial Statement prepared on the appropriate accounting basis (receipts and payments, or income and expenditure) for a year to 31 March shall be presented to each councillor before the end of the following month of May. The Statement of Accounts of the Council (which is subject to external audit), including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to Council for formal approval before 30 June.

19. Estimates/precepts

- a **The Council shall approve written estimates for the coming financial year** at its meeting before the end January.
- b Any committee desiring to incur expenditure shall give the Clerk a written estimate of the expenditure recommended for the coming year no later than January.

20. Canvassing of and recommendations by councillors

- a Canvassing councillors or the members of a committee, directly or indirectly, for appointment to or by the Council shall disqualify the candidate from such an appointment. The Clerk shall disclose the requirements of this standing order to every candidate.
- b A councillor or a member of a committee shall not solicit a person for appointment to or by the Council or recommend a person for such appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such person may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability,

experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.

- c This standing order shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

21. Inspection of documents

- a Subject to standing orders to the contrary or in respect of matters, which are confidential, a councillor may, for the purpose of his official duties (but not otherwise), inspect any document in the possession of the Council or a committee, and request a copy for the same purpose. The minutes of meetings of the Council, its committee's shall be available for inspection by councillors.

22. Unauthorised activities

- a Unless authorised by a resolution, no individual councillor shall in the name or on behalf of the Council or a committee:
 - i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect;
or
 - ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

23. Confidential business

- a Councillors shall not disclose information given in confidence or which they believe, or ought to be aware is of a confidential nature.
- b A councillor in breach of the provisions of standing order 24(a) above may be removed from a committee by a resolution of the Council.

24. Matters affecting the Clerk

- a The Council will draft and sign an employment Contract with the Clerk. This will be reviewed and renewed every two years. The original copy of this contract is to be held in the Councils files.
- b If a meeting considers any matter personal to the Clerk, it shall not be considered until the Council has decided whether the press and public shall be excluded pursuant to standing order 1(c) above.
- c The Chairman or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and/or appraisal of the Clerk and shall keep a written record of it. The review and/or appraisal shall be reported back and shall be subject to approval by resolution.
- d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Clerk shall contact the Chairman or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution.
- e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance and disciplinary matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by the Clerk relates to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, this shall be communicated to another member of the Council.
- f The Council shall keep written records relating to the Clerk secure. All paper records shall be secured under lock and electronic records shall be password protected.
- g Records documenting reasons for the Clerk's absence due to ill health or details of a medical condition shall be made available only to those persons with responsibility for the same.
- h Only persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to the records referred to in standing orders 26(f) and (g) above if so justified.

25. Freedom of Information Act 2000

- a All requests for information held by the Council shall be processed by the Clerk and then referred to the Chairman.

- b Correspondence from, and notices served by, the Information Commissioner shall be referred by the Clerk to the chairman. The Council shall have the power to do anything to facilitate compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 including exercising the powers of the Clerk in respect of Freedom of Information requests set out under standing order 3(b)(x) above.

26. Relations with the press/media

- a All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be processed by the Clerk and then referred to the Chairman.

- b In accordance with this policy, councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media.

27. Liaison with County Councillors

- a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the councillors of the County Council representing Copplestone.

- b Unless the Council otherwise orders, a copy of each letter sent to the County Council shall be sent to the County councillors representing Copplestone.

28. Financial matters

- a The Council shall consider and approve financial regulations drawn up by the Clerk,

which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:

- i. the accounting records and systems of internal control.
- ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council.
- iii. the work of the Internal Auditor 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.
- v. procurement policies, including the setting of values for different procedures where the contract has an estimated value of less than £5000.

b Any proposed contract for the supply of goods, materials, services and the execution of works with an estimated value more than £500 shall be procured based on a formal tender as summarised in standing order 28(c) below.

c Any formal tender process shall comprise the following steps:

- i. a public notice of intention to place a contract to be placed in a local newspaper.
- ii. a specification of the goods, materials, services and the execution of works shall be drawn up.
- iii. tenders are to be sent, in a sealed marked envelope, to the Clerk by a stated date and time.
- iv. tenders submitted are to be opened, after the stated closing date and time, by the Clerk and at least one member of the Council.
- v. tenders are then to be assessed and reported to the appropriate meeting of Council or Committee.

d Neither the Council, nor any committee, is bound to accept the lowest tender, estimate or quote.

e Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed £138,893 (or other threshold specified by the Office of Government Commerce from time to time) the Council must consider whether the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No.5, as amended) and the Utilities Contracts Regulations 2006 (SI No. 6, as amended) apply to the contract and, if either of those Regulations apply, the Council must comply with EU procurement rules.

29. Allegations of breaches of the code of conduct

- a On receipt of a notification that there has been an alleged breach of the code of conduct the Clerk shall refer it to the Chairman who may refer it to the Council.

- b Where the notification relates to a complaint made by the Clerk, the Clerk shall notify the Chairman, who, upon receipt of such notification, shall nominate a person to assume the duties of the Clerk set out in the remainder of this standing order, who shall continue to act in respect of that matter as such until the complaint is resolved.

- c The subject matter of notifications shall be confidential and, insofar as it is possible to do so by law, the Council (including the Clerk and the Chairman shall take the steps set out below, together with other steps considered necessary, to maintain confidentiality.
 - i. Draft the summonses and agendas in such a way that the identity and subject matter of the complaint are not disclosed.
 - ii. Ensure that any background papers containing the information set out in standing order 31(a) above are not made public.
 - iii. Ensure that the public and press are excluded from meetings as appropriate.
 - iv. Ensure that the minutes of meetings preserve confidentiality.
 - v. Consider any liaison that may be required with the person or body with statutory responsibility for the investigation of the matter.

- d Standing order 29(c) above should not be taken to prohibit the Council (whether through the Clerk or the Chairman from disclosing information to members and officers of the Council or to other persons where such disclosure is necessary to deal with the complaint or is required by law.

- e The Council committee shall have the power to:
 - i. seek documentary and other evidence from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter.
 - ii. seek and share information relevant to the complaint.
 - iii. grant the member involved a financial indemnity in respect of legal costs, which shall be in accordance with the law and subject to approval by a meeting of the

full Council.

- g References in standing order 29 to a notification shall be taken to refer to a communication of any kind, which relates to a breach or an alleged breach of the code of conduct by a councillor.

30. Variation, revocation and suspension of Standing Orders

- a Any or every part of Standing Orders may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business, except those printed in bold type, which are mandatory by law and thus updated automatically to reflect legislation.
- b A Motion to permanently to add, vary or revoke a Standing Order not mandatory by law, shall when proposed and seconded not be carried unless two thirds of the councillors at the meeting of the Council vote in favour of the same. It shall then stand adjourned without further discussion until the next meeting of the Council.

31. Standing Orders to be given to councillors

- a The Clerk shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor upon delivery of his declaration of acceptance of office.
- b The Chairman's decision as to the application of standing orders at meetings shall be final.
- c A councillor's failure to observe standing orders more than 3 times in one meeting may result in him being excluded from the meeting in accordance with standing orders.

Appendix 1.

Public Participation at Parish Council Meetings

Members of the public have a legal right to attend the monthly Copplestone Parish Council () meetings as well as any Extraordinary or Planning meetings that may be called from time to time.

Members of the Public (referred to as MOP's) may be excluded (by a resolution of the meeting-known as Part 2) for specific items which need to be discussed in confidence, for example, but not limited to staffing matters, financial details relating to individuals or tenders for contracts. MOP's have no legal right to speak at meetings of the Council. However, as part of its community engagement, sets aside time for public participation at meetings. has consulted with the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) and the following information has now been agreed and is for members of the public wishing to address questions or comments to the Council.

1. Questions or comments from members of the public shall appear as an agenda item for all meetings (including Extraordinary and planning meetings) It shall be held after declarations of interest so that everyone is aware if a member has a prejudicial interest.

The guidelines are for a maximum of 20 minutes for the agenda item (open forum) and no more than 3 minutes per topic. If several people wish to speak in relation to a particular topic then they will be respected to elect a spokesperson for the group for and also against the topic. It will be these persons only who will address the Council.

2. Question(s) will be answered by the Chair or the Clerk following which the questioner will be entitled to ask one supplementary question. If the supplementary question is not able to be answered at the meeting, a written reply will be sent to the questioner as early as possible after the meeting.
3. Councilor(s) with a prejudicial interest in an agenda item will be allowed to speak during this agenda item (and then leave the room when the item is considered)
4. Public participation is best used for issues where a decision will or could be made by the Council at the meeting for items already on the agenda. Questions should ideally be submitted to the Parish Clerk no less than 3 working days prior to the respective meeting. This is to allow sufficient time for research and preparation of an appropriate response. Questions may be submitted either in writing or by email for the respective meeting. **It is important to note that the Council is unable to make a binding decision in law unless a specific item has been included on the agenda.**
5. It is not good use of time for members of the public to raise comments about matters such as hedges, streetlights, potholes and gulley's etc., during public participation unless pertinent to a matter before the Council and contained on the agenda. Such areas of concern should be raised with the Clerk and Lead Councilor for the appropriate area to address and, if necessary, bring a resolution to a subsequent meeting.
6. It is undesirable to allow MOPs to speak throughout the meeting as this runs the risk of confusing the roles of Councilors, who participate in the meeting and, MOP's who observe. MOP's will not be allowed to speak during debate by the Council. The Chair

may decide to adjourn the meeting where Councilors express a wish to seek additional clarification from MOP's.

7. Comments made during public participation will be (very briefly) minuted and will not necessarily be a verbatim record. There is no need to minute names of MOP's who speak but the Council will endeavor to do so where pertinent.
8. Remarks of a libelous, offensive, discriminatory, criminal or otherwise unlawful manner will not be minuted as the Parish Council is liable for the content of the minutes even where another has uttered them.
9. Neither Councilors nor the Clerk should feel under pressure to respond immediately to comments made during public participation other than those which relate to items on the agenda. A comment could be referred to the Clerk to write to or meet the speaker or alternatively could form the basis for a future agenda item. MOP's do not have the right to force items onto the meeting agendas.
10. MOP should not heckle or otherwise disrupt proceedings and should respect rulings of the Chair. The Chair of any meeting has an inherent right to exclude a disorderly person. MOP's have the legal right to be present so exclusion will be a last resort. Alternatively, if there is serious disorder the Chair may decide to adjourn whilst order prevails and to allow all participants the time to calm down.