

DATCHET PARISH COUNCIL



Standing Orders 2026

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A copy of these Standing Orders will be given by the Clerk to each member of the Council upon delivery to the Clerk of the Member's declaration of acceptance of office.

NOTE - For simplicity, in these Standing Orders and all associated documents the words 'he' and 'his' will also be used to refer to 'she' and 'hers'

Working days for the Parish office are Monday, Wednesday and Fridays only.

1. Council Meetings

- 1.1 Meeting of the Council will be held at times and place appointed by the Council and named in the summons to the meeting.
- 1.2 Meetings are usually held on the 2nd Monday evening each month starting at 19.00 hrs-in Datchet Village Hall, unless advertised otherwise. The meeting planned to end at 21.00 hrs.
- 1.3 In the event of the business of the meeting not being completed by 21.00 hrs the meeting will only continue by a majority votes of members present to extend the meeting, until an agreed item is discussed, or the business of the meeting has been completed, or until an agreed time.
- 1.4 Any unfinished business will stand adjourned until the next ordinary meeting of the Council, unless there and then council agrees by a majority to adjourn the meeting and reconvene at an agreed date to complete the meeting. When an Extra Ordinary meeting runs out of time and a further Extra Ordinary meeting is called to complete the business.
- 1.5 **Meetings of the Council will be held as follows:**
 - 1.5.1 An Annual Statutory meeting will be held during the month of May. In an election year this meeting will normally be held on the Monday following the fourth day after the day of election of the Council.
 - 1.5.2 Not less than three other Ordinary meetings will be held in each municipal year.
 - 1.5.3 Additional Ordinary meetings will be held as decided by the Council at the Annual Statutory meeting each year.
 - 1.5.4. Further Extra Ordinary meetings may be called at any time by the Chairman as deemed necessary for effective conduct of the Council's business.

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- 1.5.5 If the Chairman does not or refuses to call an Extra Ordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two members, any two members may convene an Extra Ordinary meeting of the Council.
- 1.5.6 The public notice giving the time, location and agenda for the Extraordinary meeting must be signed by the Proper Officer (Clerk to the Council).
- 1.5.7 No other business will be considered at the Extraordinary meeting.
- 1.5.8 The Annual Parish meeting must be held between 1st March and 1st June and not before 6pm. This meeting is called by the Chair and public notice must be given 7 clear days before the meeting. The Parish Council will hold its meeting in April once a year where the Council will report to local residents, through the Lead Members on the Council's activities during the past year (other than in an election year). This is not an Ordinary meeting of the Council and no Council business will be transacted at that time.
- 1.5.9 All meetings will be recorded, and an audio file will be uploaded to the Council Website and will remain available for a period of 6 months from the date of the meeting. Part II (confidential) meetings will also be recorded by the Clerk solely for the purpose of preparing the minutes. These recordings will be deleted once the minutes are approved and will not be shared publicly.
- 1.6 **Notice of time and place of meeting:**
 - 1.6.1 A notice of the time and place of the meeting and business to be transacted signed by the Proper Officer (Clerk to the Council) will be publicly displayed on the Parish Council notice board and on the Council website.
 - 1.6.2 This notice will be displayed at least **five** clear days before a meeting of the Council. These days will not include the days of issue or the meeting, Sunday, the days of Christmas, Easter and bank holidays, and days appointed for the public Thanksgiving or Mourning. So, for Datchet Parish Council these days will usually be Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Therefore, the notice will be posted by the end of the Monday before each meeting.
 - 1.6.3 A similar period before any meeting of the Council, a summons signed by the Proper Officer (Clerk to the Council) together with a copy of the agenda specifying the business to be transacted at the meeting and any relevant documentation, will be sent by email to the usual email address of every member of the Council.

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- 1.6.4 Members are required to attend Council meetings on a regular and prompt basis. Where absence, late arrival and /or early departure are unavoidable the member concerned shall offer an apology and an explanation for his default. Apologies will not be accepted by another party other than the chairman or Clerk / Admin Clerk. Apologies should be given with a reason by email to Clerk@datchetparishcouncil.gov.uk or via Phone on the office number and be made by 5:00pm on the night of the meeting. If the above does not happen no apologies will be included in the minutes.
- 1.6.5 Meetings will be open to the public and the press except where the Council formally resolve to exclude them from all or part of the meeting, ([See section 10](#)), on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of the business or of the proceedings. (Part 2 meeting).
- 1.6.6 All mobile phones will be turned off or on silent setting during meetings of the Council and not used by Council members during the meeting.

2. Chair of meetings

- 2.1 The Chairman will preside at meetings. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman will preside.
- 2.2 If both are absent, a member chosen by vote of the members present will preside at that meeting.
- 2.3 The person presiding at a meeting of the Council will exercise all powers and duties of the Chairman in relation to the conduct of the meeting.
- 2.4 At the Annual Statutory meeting the Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or become disqualified, will continue in office and preside at the meeting until his successor is elected.
- 2.5 In an election year, if the current Chairman has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he will preside at the Statutory meeting using normal voting rights as Chairman until a new Chairman has been elected.
- 2.6 In an election year, if the current Chairman has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he will preside at the statutory meeting until the new Chairman is elected. The outgoing Chairman does not have a vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman but must give a casting vote in the case of an equal number of votes cast.

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3 Proper Officer

- 3.1 Where a statute, regulation or order confers functions, duties or responsibilities on the proper officer of the council this will be the Clerk.
- 3.2 The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.
- 3.3 The Proper Officer shall: At least five clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee or a sub-committee,
- 3.4 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
- 3.5 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).
- 3.6 Convene a meeting of the Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office;
- 3.7 Facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;
- 3.8 Receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;
- 3.9 Hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;
- 3.10 Hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests;
- 3.11 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;
- 3.12 Receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;
- 3.13 Assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form

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subject to the requirements of data protection and freedom of information legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g. The Limitation Act 1980);

- 3.14 Arrange for legal deeds to be executed;
- 3.15 Arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;
- 3.16 Record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book for such purpose;
- 3.17 Refer a planning application received by the Council to the Lead and Deputy members of Planning or in their absence the Chair or in their absence the Vice-Chair within two 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;

4 Quorum

- 4.1 A quorum will be **five members** of the Council. No business can be transacted or decision be taken at any meeting of the Council unless there is a quorum of members.
- 4.2 If a quorum is not present when the Council meets or if during a meeting of members present and not disbarred by reason of a declared personal or prejudicial interest falls below the quorum, the business not transacted at that meeting will be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Chairman may determine.

5 Order of business

- 5.1 At an Annual Statutory meeting business will be as follows:
 - 5.1.1 To elect a Chairman
 - 5.1.2 To receive the Chairman's declaration of acceptance of office.
 - 5.1.3 To elect a Vice-Chairman.
- 5.12 In an election year to receive such declarations of acceptance of office as are required by law, or if not then received to decide when these will be received.

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- 5.1.3 In an election year, if the outgoing Chairman is retiring from the Council, he will continue to be Chairman until the new Chairman has been elected by the Council. In this situation he cannot vote for the new Chairman but must give a casting vote if there are an equal number of votes.
- 5.1.6. To appoint Lead members and deputies to research and bring recommendations to Council for their area of responsibility.
- 5.1.7 Appointment of members to be representatives on outside bodies.
- 5.1.8 It is the responsibility of persons representing the Council on outside bodies to ensure that a report comes back to the council in time for the next meeting and are permitted only to give the views of the Council at these meetings and not their personal views.

5.2 At all other meetings

- 5.2.1 At any meeting other than the Annual Statutory meeting the first business will be to appoint a Chairman if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council are both absent.
- 5.2.2 The member presiding at a meeting of the Council will exercise all powers and duties of the Chairman in relation to the conduct of that meeting.
- 5.2.3 Thereafter unless the chairman of the meeting otherwise decides on the grounds of urgency or expediency, the order of business will be as set out in the agenda (see Appendix A - Model Agenda).

6 Rules of debate

- 6.1 When the Chairman or any member is speaking all other members will remain silent.
- 6.2 All members will direct their speech through the Chair.
- 6.3 No discussion will take place upon the minutes of the previous meeting except upon their accuracy.
- 6.4 Corrections to the minutes will be made by resolution and recorded in the minutes of the meeting at which the amendment is made.
- 6.5 A member will indicate a wish to speak by raising a hand and will not speak until called upon to do so by the Chairman. If two or more members indicate a

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wish to speak the Chairman will call upon one to speak, the other waiting their turn until called.

- 6.6 When speaking, members will confine their comments to the matter under discussion and avoid any irrelevance, repetition and verbosity.
- 6.7 No members at a meeting will disregard the ruling of the Chairman, wilfully obstruct the business of the meeting, or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly or in such a manner as to scandalise the council or bring it into contempt, ridicule or disrepute.
- 6.8 If in the opinion of the Chairman a member has contravened any of the provision above, the Chairman will express that opinion to the meeting.
- 6.9 Thereafter, any member may move that the member named be no longer heard, or that the member named leaves the meeting.
- 6.10 The motion if seconded will be put forth with and without discussion.
- 6.11 If they wish, members may stand to speak in order to be better heard, and at all times must use the microphone. Except in Part II meetings, where microphones will be turned off.

7 Disturbance at meetings

- 7.1 Anyone whether a member of the council or the public, who disturbs the proceedings, may be required by resolution to remain silent during the present debate or to withdraw.
- 7.2 It is not desirable for such a resolution to be moved until the Chairman has at least once requested the offender to desist and the request has been ignored.
- 7.3 Mere heat or anger in discussion is not of itself a ground for excluding a member, but any interruption by the public is technically a disturbance.
- 7.4 Where the request by the Chairman has been disregarded, the resolution will then be put automatically and without comment by the Chairman or any member.
- 7.5 An offender who refuses to comply with the resolution may be removed by force, but care should be taken to use no more force than is necessary. It is usually desirable (but not legally necessary) to secure the help of the police.

8 Resolution moved on notice

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- 8.1 No resolution can be moved unless the business to which it relates has been put on the agenda by the Clerk. A member may request for a motion to be put on the agenda by giving notice to the Clerk in writing at least five working days before the summons to the meeting of the council.
- 8.2 Any member may move a resolution of a matter on the agenda when it is under debate, which should then be discussed and voted upon.
- 8.3 A proposal or amendment will not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded. It should be written down by the Clerk and read out to the council before it is discussed further or put to the meeting, and also directly before a vote is taken.
- 8.4 A member will direct their speech to the matter under discussion or to personal explanation or to a point of order. Point of order is a query in a formal debate if a procedure is not being followed.
- 8.5 A member may make a point of order, subject to agreement by the chairman, or give a personal explanation. For this purpose a member will be heard forthwith. A personal explanation will be confined to clarification of some material part of a former speech that may have been misunderstood.
- 8.6 An amendment to a proposal can only be made to change the wording by adding or removing words.
- 8.7 An amendment will not have the effect of negating the motion before the council. Members can achieve this by voting against the motion.
- 8.8 If an amendment be carried, the resolution as amended will take the place of the original resolution and will become the resolution upon which any further amendment may be moved.
- 8.9 A further amendment will not be moved until the council has disposed of every amendment previously moved.
- 8.10 The mover of the resolution has a right to reply immediately before the resolution is put to the vote.
- 8.11 If an amendment is proposed the mover of the resolution is entitled to reply immediately before the amendment is put to the vote. (Right of reply)
- 8.12 A member exercising a right of reply will not introduce new matter.



8.13 After the right of reply has been exercised or waived, a vote will be taken without further discussion.

9. Resolution without notice

9.1 When a resolution is under debate no other resolution will be moved other than the following, on a 'point of order':

9.1.1 Amend the resolution ([see section 8](#)).

9.1.2 Adjourn the debate – refer the matter to the relevant Lead Member or other councillor(s) to bring back a report to the next council meeting.

9.1.3 The resolution is referred to a working group.

9.1.4 The member named is not further heard.

9.1.5 The member named leaves the meeting.

9.1.6 The question is now put. i.e. without further discussion.

9.1.7 To exclude the public and press.

9.1.8 Adjourn the meeting.

9.1.9 Personal explanation.

10 Exclusion of the Public and Press

10.1 Meetings will be open to the public and the press except where the Council formally resolves to exclude them from all or part of the meeting.

10.2 The Chairman may move that the press and public be excluded from a council meeting (whether for the whole or part of the proceedings) on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by virtue of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

10.3 Or, for other special reasons arising from the nature of that business or the proceeding where the agenda item relates to the consideration of: - tenders, leases, purchases of assets, for matters relating to staffing covered by the data General Protection Act and to consider complaints against the council or a code of conduct complaint.



10.4 The resolution to move into a confidential session must be passed by full Council to substantiate the exclusion.

11 Questions

11.1 Any members may ask the Chairman or the Clerk a question in relation to the business under discussion.

11.2 Any question not connected with the business under discussion will not be asked except during that part of the meeting set aside for such questions.

11.3 Relevant questions will be put in a concise, clear and explicit manner and answered without interruption.

11.4 Advance notice of a question requiring a detailed reply should be given to the Chairman or Clerk not less than five working days prior to the meeting at which the question is to be raised. (Working days for the Parish office are Monday, Wednesday and Fridays only). The response will be given at a time agreed between the two parties and at the next meeting of the council. Such questions include those that the answer may not readily be available without notice.

11.5 A person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer at the time. In this circumstance, a written or verbal reply will be provided at the next meeting of the council or if agreed by the council, directly to the member outside of the meeting by an email to all members, unless alternative arrangements have been made.

12 Points of Order – (i.e. not following procedures)

12.1 The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation will not be discussed.

12.2 The extent and length of any discussion is a matter for the Chairman, who should exercise a balance between ensuring a full and relevant discussion whilst avoiding verbosity, irrelevance, repetition and prevarication.

13 Closure

13.1 At the end of any speech a member may, without comment, move that (i) the question be now put, (ii) the debate be now adjourned, (iii) the council do now adjourn.

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- 13.2 If such motion is seconded, the Chairman will put the motion but in the case of a motion 'to put the question', only if the Chairman is of the opinion that the question before the council has been sufficiently debated.
- 13.3 If the motion 'that the question is now put' is carried, the Chairman will call the mover to exercise or waive their right of reply and shall put the question immediately after that right has been exercised or waived.
- 13.4 The adjournment of a debate or of the council will not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

14 Voting

- 14.1 Members will vote by a show of hands or, if the majority of members present so request before the ballot, by a secret ballot on paper.
- 14.2 The Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote and, in the case of an equality of votes may also give a casting vote.
- 14.3 Where more than two members have been nominated for any position to be filled by the council and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority in favour of one member, the name of the member having the least number of votes will be struck off the list and a new vote will be taken until such time as a majority of votes is given in favour of one member.
- 14.4 If a member asks for a named vote, the request for this should be made before the vote is taken. The Clerk will record the names of the members who voted on a given motion so as to show whether they voted for or against the motion or abstained.
- 14.5 If a secret vote is requested, once the results have been recorded, the ballot papers will be destroyed at the end of the meeting by the Clerk.
- 14.6 A decision of the council on a resolution will not be reversed or rescinded within a period of six months from the date of the council except either by special resolution bearing the names of at least five members of the council, or by a resolution moved following a report or recommendation of a working group.

15 Members' conduct

- 15.1 All members must at all times comply with these standing orders and with the current code of conduct.

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- 15.2 In public situations, council members must not behave or speak in a manner so as to bring the council into disrepute.
- 15.3 Similarly, in day-to-day life it is important that council members do not give the impression that they are speaking on behalf of the council, particularly if they are expressing, or could be perceived to be expressing their own personal views.
- 15.4 This is especially important when dealing with members of the press who are skilled at obtaining information during conversations and may report it in such a way as to support their own views and stories.
- 15.5 The press officers for the council are the Clerk and the Chairman, and all communications with the press and other media will go through them.
- 15.6 If a candidate for any appointment (i.e. employment) under the council is to their knowledge related to any council member, or the holder of any office under the council, they and the person to whom they are related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Clerk, who will report to the council any such disclosure.
- 15.7 A candidate who fails so to do will be disqualified for such appointment.
- 15.8 The Clerk will make known the purpose of this standing order to every candidate.
- 15.9 In the case of the council employees or those seeking appointment (employment) by the council, no member of the council will solicit for any person any appointment or promotion under the council or recommend any person for such appointment or promotion. Nevertheless, a member may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for consideration by the council in considering an application for appointment or promotion.

16 Members of the public and press in council meetings

- 16.1 Meetings will be open to the public and the press unless it is deemed necessary to exclude them for reasons stated. ([Section 1.6.5 above](#)).
- 16.2 Provision will be provided for members of the press and public to have access to agendas and other relevant documents, (including Lead Members' reports), prior to meetings.

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- 16.3 Members of the public have no rights to speak at a council meeting unless the council authorises this.
- 16.4 When a member of the council is speaking, everyone else present will remain silent.
- 16.5 A member of the Borough Council has no special rights above those of any other member of the public.
- 16.6 Members of the public may speak during Public Questions at the beginning of the meeting and also during the consideration of individual planning application, when so permitted by the Chairman to a maximum of 5 minutes per application, unless agreed by Chairman.
- 16.7 Public questions time on the agenda is only for questions with answers to be given and is not the opportunity for members of the public to engage in debate with members of the council or with each other.
- 16.8 The length of time for public questions at the beginning and end of the meeting is limited to only 10 minutes in total to enable the business on the agenda to be completed in a timely manner, unless the Chairman exercises discretion otherwise.
- 16.9 As with councillors and at appropriate times, members of the public should indicate a wish to speak by raising a hand and not speak until called upon to do so by the Chairman.
- 16.10 When the Chairman, any member of the council or of the public is speaking everyone present will remain silent.
- 16.11 If a member of the public continuously interrupts the proceeding of any meeting the Chairman may, after giving a warning, order that they leave or be removed from the meeting.
- 16.12 A local council is entitled to control disorderly conduct by members of the public and the council. The council is justified in requiring a disruptive person to leave a meeting. In these situations, it is advisable, though not essential, to call the police and adjourn the meeting.
- 17 Council documents**
All council documents are in the public domain unless the council has agreed that specific documents should be confidential. Employee files are a specific example.

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18 Minutes

- 18.1 Minutes of the proceedings of every council meeting are to be kept by the Clerk in a book or in a loose-leaf file with consecutively numbered pages.
- 18.2 Draft minutes will be sent by email to all members by seven working days of the meeting for members to reply with any inaccuracies before issue. The aim is that all inaccuracies and corrections should be cleared prior to the meeting thus making approval at the meeting a formality.
- 18.3 A final copy of the unapproved version will be sent to all members prior to the meeting along with any other documents for that meeting as is necessary. At the same time the minutes will be published on the parish website.
- 18.4 The names of members present at any council meeting must be recorded.
- 18.5 Minutes will be short and in general terms record only proposals and resolutions and not the debates that preceded them.
- 18.6 The council minutes must be signed at the same time or at the next meeting of the council by the presiding Chairman. If a loose-leaf file is used, each page should be initialled by the Chairman when the minutes are signed.
- 18.7 The minutes of the Annual Statutory meeting will be agreed at the next ordinary meeting of the council.

19 Other council documents

- 19.1 All documents relating to the business of the council will be held in safe keeping by the Clerk or such third parties as may be duly approved by the council.
- 19.2 All formal correspondence for or on behalf of the council will be directed through the Clerk.
- 19.3 Any member may for the purpose of their council duties inspect any document in the possession of the council and will on request to the Clerk be provided with a copy.

20 Confidentiality

- 20.1 In the course of their duties, members of council will acquire information that has not yet been made public and is still confidential. All such documentation will be marked to indicate that they are confidential.

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- 20.2 It is a betrayal of trust to breach such confidences, and members should never disclose or use confidential information for the personal advantage of themselves or of anyone known to them, or to the disadvantage or discredit of the council or anyone else, or for any other reason.
- 20.3 No members of the council or any working group will disclose to any person not a member of the council any business declared to be confidential by the council or a working group as the case may be.
- 20.4 This applies to spoken information, but in particular to written information such as documents in process of being developed and /or awaiting finalisation by the council.
- 20.5 A member breaching any of these Standing orders will be removed from any of its working groups.
- 20.6 In a 'Part II' section of a meeting only the subject of the topic to be debated will be published in the agenda with the summons to the meeting.
- 20.7 In such a meeting the outcome and any decisions made will be reported in the minutes of that meeting. The proceedings and debate will remain confidential unless the council decides otherwise.

21. Lead Members

- 21.1 The council will at the Annual Statutory meeting appoint one or more Lead Member and Deputies to undertake responsibilities for such key areas as the council may find necessary for the conduct of its business.
- 21.2 The terms of reference and authorities for each lead member shall be determined by the council (Appendix B).
- 21.3 The council may at any time appoint further lead members with such terms of reference as may be deemed necessary from time to time.
- 21.4 The council will appoint Lead members for a period up to the next Annual Statutory meeting.
- 21.5 The Council may also appoint Spokespersons /Lead Members or Co-ordinators /Members for other aspects of council work as required.

22 Working groups

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- 22.1 The council may appoint one or more working groups for purposes specified by the Chairman in pursuance of the responsibilities and business of the council.
- 22.2 These will include the relevant Lead Members and other persons to facilitate effective working and decision making in order to report recommendations to council. Note that Working Groups cannot be delegated decision making responsibilities.
- 22.3 Any working group will comprise of individuals having relevant knowledge or experience. These will always consist of at least two members of the council.
- 22.4 In addition, members of the public with specialist knowledge may be co-opted as and when required, although council members will determine the recommendation.
- 22.5 Each working group Leader or Coordinator will keep written notes of all meetings that will be issued to the clerk, each working group will also either issue a written report by the Wed of the week prior to the next Council Meeting for comment and questions or formally state nothing to report. These reports and any addition answers will be put on the Parish Council website on the Friday prior to the meeting.
- 22.6 Meetings of working groups will not be at set times but will be arranged by the leaders of those groups at times and places appropriate for the work they are undertaking. Notes of decisions made in these meetings will be completed by the group for reporting back to the council along with any recommendations.
- 22.7 The Council will appoint Working Group Leaders for a period up to the next Annual Statutory meeting.

23 Committees

- 23.1 Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.
- 23.2 The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council or management of staff.
- 23.3 The Council may appoint committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:
 - I. shall determine their terms of reference;
 - II. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

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24 Planning applications

- 24.1 The Clerk will download from the Royal Borough website and record all information regarding notifications of planning applications with the parish.
- 24.2 The Clerk will refer every planning application to the responsible lead member at least five working days before the next council meeting.

25 Liaison with Borough councillors

- 25.1 A notice of council meetings together with an invitation to attend shall be sent to each of the borough councillors representing the Datchet ward.
- 25.2 Unless the council otherwise resolves, a copy of every letter ordered to be sent on behalf of the council to the Borough council will be sent to each of the borough councillors representing the Datchet ward.

26 Employees of the council

- 26.1 All employees of the council will have a formal contract of employment in compliance with current United Kingdom statutory requirement.
- 26.2 If at a meeting of the council there arises any matter relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, emoluments or conditions of service of any employee of the council, such matters will not be considered until, the public and press have been excluded (confidential session.)
- 26.3 Terms and conditions of council employees will be set in line with national employment agreements for local government employees.

27 Complaints

- 27.1 The council will deal with complaints alleging maladministration or misconduct on the part of the council and any of its members in accordance with the current code of conduct.
- 27.2 In the case of a complaint about any action or behaviour by a member of the council, including the chairman, where the code of conduct has been breached, this shall be referred to the Monitoring Officer at Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead RBWM.) Where the code of conduct has not been breached the council will deal with complaints through the Clerk, Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman or a nominated councillor.
- 27.3 In the case of a complaint about any action or behaviour by an officer or employee of the council, or about any individual working on behalf of the

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council, the person should first be approached in confidence by the Clerk and/or Chairman or Vice-Chairman in person for an explanation of the alleged behaviour or action as part of any investigation.

- 27.4 Except as provided in 27.5 below, the clerk or the chairman shall use their best endeavours to settle the matter in 27.2 above, directly with the complainant.
- 27.5 Where the clerk receives a written complaint concerning their own actions, the complaint will be referred forthwith to the chairman and if deemed necessary, forthwith to the next meeting of the council (as a Part II meeting).
- 27.6 In the event of any complaint made orally to a member or the clerk which cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the time, the complainant will be advised to put their complaint in writing addressed to the clerk, the chairman, or the Monitoring Officer depending on who the complaint is about.
- 27.7 The Council will defer dealing with any written complaint only if it is of the opinion that issues of law or practice arise on which advice is necessary from the Monitoring Office, NALC or the council's solicitors. Such a complaint will be dealt with at the next Council meeting after the advice has been received.
- 27.8 As soon as possible after a decision on a complaint has been made, the decision and any action to be taken by the council as a result, will be communicated in writing to the complainant either by the clerk, the chairman, or the Monitoring Officer.
- 27.9 If it is decided to take the matter to Council it should first be dealt with in a Part II meeting so as not to compromise the confidentiality of any persons involved.
- 27.10 The minutes to this part of the meeting will be recorded in such a manner as to avoid compromising the confidentiality of any individual.

28 Financial affairs

- 28.1 The financial affairs of the council will be conducted in accordance with current statutory requirements, these standing orders, and the Financial Regulations.
- 28.2 In all its activities having financial implications the council will seek to achieve best value. This may not always be guided by the cheapest option.
- 28.3 The responsible financial officer (RFO) will be responsible for keeping and balancing the accounts of the council in a proper manner and reporting back to the council at regular intervals as determined by the council.

29 Responsibilities under data protection legislation

Below is not an exclusive list



- a. The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.
- b. The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning his 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.

30 Responsibilities to provide information

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.

The Council, shall publish information in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.

31 Changes to standing orders

- 31.1 Any part of these standing orders may be temporarily suspended by resolution of the council in relation to any specific item of the council business in so far as it is legal to do so, with exception of matters relating to the following:
 - 31.2 Declaration of members' interests.
 - 31.3 Voting procedures.
 - 31.4 Payment of money.
 - 31.5 Members' conduct.
 - 31.6 Subject to the requirements of the law, any other part of these standing orders may be permanently revised, varied, amended or revoked by resolution properly proposed and seconded and duly adopted by the council.
 - 31.7 These standing orders should be reviewed every year and any appropriate changes made by resolution of the council.



32. Execution and sealing of legal deeds

- 32.1 A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.
- 32.2 Subject to standing order 32.1 any two councillors may sign, on behalf of the Council, any deed required by law and the Proper Officer shall witness their signatures.

33. Accounts and accounting statements

- 33.1 “Proper practices” in standing orders refer to the most recent version of Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – a Practitioners’ Guide”.
- 33.2 All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council’s financial regulations.
- 33.3 The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:
 - i. the Council’s receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;
 - ii. the Council’s aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) 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.
- 33.4 As soon as possible after the financial year end at 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.



33.5 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.

34 Financial controls and procurement

34.1 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
- v. whether contracts with an estimated value below [60,000] due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise.

34.2 Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.

34.3 Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:

- i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;

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- ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;
 - iii. tenders are to be submitted in writing by email or in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;
 - iv. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;
 - v. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.
- 34.4 Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.
- 34.5 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 details.



Appendix A

Model Agenda

1. Apologies and Announcements.
2. **Public Question Time** (*Limited to maximum 10 minutes unless directed by the Chairman. A member of the public shall not speak for more than 2 minutes*) and must use the microphone.
3. **To receive any Declarations of interest**
4. **To agree** accuracy of minutes of the previous Council meeting.
5. **Matters arising** from the above minutes (for update only - no further discussion)
6. To conclude business, if any from previous meeting.
7. General
 - i) Chairman's report
 - ii) Clerk's report
8. **Planning** – Lead Member's report
 - to hear recommendations from the Lead of Planning,
 - The Clerk to be directed to inform RBWM of recommendations from the Parish Council of decisions made by the Council.
 - Councillor's questions
9. **Borough Councils Report:** (*For information only. Limited to 2 minutes each and 6 minutes maximum total*)
10. **Finance and Administration**
 - To approve income and expenditure for– Chairman to sign pink sheet (paper)
 - Councillors' questions
11. **Grounds**
 - Lead Member's report
 - to hear recommendations from the Lead of Grounds
 - Councillors' questions
12. **Cemetery**
 - Lead Member's report

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- to hear recommendations from the Lead of Cemetery
- Councillors' questions

13. Events

- Lead Member's report
- to hear recommendations from the Lead of Events
- Councillors' questions

14. Properties

- Lead Member's report
- to hear recommendations from the Lead of Properties
- Councillors' questions

15. Highways

- Lead Member's report
- to hear recommendations from the Lead of Highways
- Councillor's questions

16. Flooding and Drainage

- Spokesperson's / Lead Members' report
- Any recommendations
- Councillor's questions

17. Councillors' questions or comments

18. Public Questions (only for clarification relating to matters discussed on the agenda)

NB This model agenda is a guide and may be adjusted by the Clerk, Chairman or Council as deemed necessary for effective management of the Council.



Appendix B

Lead Members – Terms of Reference

Note: The Council is not permitted to delegate decision-making responsibilities to Lead Members (Local Government Act 1972, Section 12).

Purpose of this Document

These Terms of Reference define the roles and responsibilities of Lead Members of Datchet Parish Council. While Lead Members do not hold formal decision-making powers, they act as subject-area champions, supporting informed Council decision-making through monitoring, reporting, liaison with external bodies, and community engagement.

1. General Responsibilities

- 1.1 Lead Members are appointed to oversee specific areas of the Council's business, as detailed below.
- 1.2 Each Lead Member, or their deputy, must:
 - Report on relevant matters at Council meetings and as requested by the Chairman.
 - Submit a written report to all Councillors by the Wednesday preceding each Council meeting, allowing time for questions and comments.
 - Ensure that reports and responses are published on the Parish Council website by the Friday before the meeting in coordination with the Clerk.
- 1.3 Each Lead Member shall work with the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to prepare an outline financial forecast for their area of responsibility by **September** each year, to inform the following year's Precept.
- 1.4 **Appointment and Term**
 - Lead Members shall be appointed annually by resolution of the Council, typically at the Annual Meeting.
 - The term of appointment shall last until the following Annual Meeting or until otherwise determined by the Council.
 - A deputy may be appointed to support the Lead Member or act in their absence.



1.5 Conduct and Accountability

- Lead Members are expected to uphold the principles of public life (Nolan Principles), act in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, and represent the Council's interests when engaging with third parties.
- Lead Members must provide timely, accurate, and impartial information and avoid any actions that could bring the Council into disrepute.
- Failure to meet responsibilities may result in review or removal of the appointment by the Council.

1.6 Liaison with Clerk and Officers

- Lead Members will work closely with the Clerk and other Council officers to gather information, prepare reports, and ensure recommendations are properly informed and recorded.
- Lead Members may not issue instructions to staff or contractors unless authorised by Council resolution.

2. Properties

- 2.1 The Lead Member for Properties will monitor and make recommendations regarding the development, maintenance, and repair of all Council-owned or leased properties.
A current list of these properties shall be maintained by the Clerk.
- 2.2 They will prepare a regular maintenance schedule for Council properties for approval by the Council.
- 2.3 They will recommend terms for acquisition, letting, leasing, or disposal of Council property.
- 2.4 They will ensure all legal documents relating to property are securely stored with the Proper Officer or designated authority.

3. Grounds

- 3.1 The Lead Member for Grounds will oversee the management, maintenance, cleanliness, and development of all public grounds under Council responsibility.
A list of these grounds will be held by the Clerk.
- 3.2 In consultation with the Clerk, they will prepare an inspection and maintenance plan to ensure public safety, subject to Council approval.

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- 3.3 They will keep under review relevant bylaws and ensure appropriate signage is displayed.

4. Planning

- 4.1 The Lead Member for Planning will review planning applications and make recommendations to the Council in accordance with Standing Orders.
- 4.2 They will monitor local and regional planning frameworks (e.g., RBWM) and advise the Council on potential implications or developments.

5. Highways

- 5.1 The Lead Member for Highways will monitor transport and infrastructure issues within the Parish, including roads, footpaths, public transport, air traffic, and parking, and make recommendations to the Council.
- 5.2 They will liaise with Royal Borough officers to represent parishioners' interests on highways and street care.

6. Flooding and Drainage

- 6.1 The Lead Member for Flooding will oversee all matters relating to flooding and drainage within the Parish, in line with Standing Orders.
- 6.2 They will liaise with the Royal Borough and relevant agencies to advocate for the Parish on flooding and drainage issues.

7. Events

- 7.1 The Lead Member for Events will coordinate all event-related activities within the Parish and make recommendations to the Council.
- 7.2 They will act as the primary liaison between the Parish Council, the Royal Borough, and external agencies regarding events, ensuring the community's interests are represented.

8. Cemetery

- 8.1 The Lead Member for the Cemetery will oversee all matters related to Datchet Cemetery on Ditton Road and provide recommendations to the Council.



- 8.2 They will monitor the records and management of burials, as administered by the Clerk.
- 8.3 All cemetery records, including interments, sales, ownership, and plot locations, shall be securely stored in the Parish Office under the care of the Proper Officer.
- 8.4 They will liaise with the Royal Borough and external agencies on cemetery-related issues, representing the interests of residents.

9. Communications

- 9.1 The Lead Member for Communications will be responsible for supporting the Parish Council in engaging effectively with the community by improving communication channels, enhancing transparency, and ensuring residents are kept informed of Council decisions, events, and initiatives.
- 9.2 The Lead Member for Communications will be responsible for the following key areas:
 - **Content Creation & Management:**
 - Draft and publish general Council updates, notices, and newsletters in coordination with the Clerk.
 - Ensure clarity, accuracy, and accessibility of all public-facing materials.
 - Note: All press communications or statements will be managed exclusively by the Chair and the Clerk.
 - **Social Media & Online Presence:**
 - Work with councillors and clerks to create, edit and approve a process that allows good news updates to the council's social media accounts.
 - Maximise engagement and suggest improvements to reach more residents.
 - **Public Relations & Engagement:**
 - Promote council meetings, consultations, and surgeries
 - **Branding & Messaging:**

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- Maintain a consistent and professional tone across all communications.
- Ensure information is accessible and inclusive to all demographics.

- **Crisis Communications & Response:**

- Support crisis comms when required.
- Receive basic training in crisis communications to handle emergency situations (e.g., severe weather alerts, public health issues, reputational risks).
- Work with council members to ensure coordinated responses to community concerns.

- **Compliance & Confidentiality:**

- Adhere to GDPR and council policies regarding data protection and public communications.
- Ensure neutrality in political matters and compliance with council procedures

9.3 The Lead Member for Communications will work closely with the Clerk, Chairman, and other Lead Members to ensure all communications align with the Council's values and obligations, and to enhance public trust and engagement within the Parish.

10. Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference shall be reviewed by the Council annually or as required to ensure they remain relevant and effective. Amendments may be made by resolution of the Council.



Appendix C

WORKING GROUPS

The Clerk is to keep this list of groups and terms of reference up to date for review at each Council meeting if there are any changes.

All working groups will draft their terms of reference at their first meeting which subsequently be approved by Council.

1. The decision to set up a working group will be made by the council when a detailed or complicated matter arises which could not be easily debated by full council.
2. A working group will consist of a minimum of two councillors, - one being selected as Lead and can include additional councillors and advisors from local groups or relevant specialists.
3. All working groups will have one or more specific purposes and remits which will be identified when the group is set up.
4. Notes of these meetings (not minutes) will be kept as a record and so that progress can be reported back to council at its monthly meetings.
5. Working groups do not have the authority to make decisions on behalf of the council, and so will report their findings back to council at monthly meetings for a final decision to be made.
6. It is important that working groups keep to the topics within their remit and do not get side-tracked to discussing irrelevant matters.
7. All working groups will be reviewed at the at the Annual Statutory Meeting in May to decide whether or not there remains a need for them to continue.
8. Meetings of working groups are not usually, but sometimes may be held in public.



Appendix D

COMMITTEES

The Clerk is to keep this list of committees and terms of reference up to date for review at each Council meeting if there are any changes.

All committees at the first meeting will elect a chairman and vice chair before conducting another business.

All committees will draft their terms of reference at their first meeting which subsequently be approved by Council.

1. All meetings of Parish Council committees will be convened in accordance with the Parish Council's Standing Orders.
2. Committee agendas and minutes will be structured and formalised by the Clerk in discussions with the Committee Chair and meetings will be minute by a delegated officer of the council.
3. Minutes will be kept as a record by the Clerk and so that progress can be reported back to council at its monthly meetings.
4. The press and public may be excluded from committee meetings if 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 shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for that exclusion.
5. A committee will consist of a minimum of four councillors, - one being selected as chairman and a second as vice-chair.
6. Delegated powers will be defined with a scheme of delegation to be confirmed at the Annual Parish Council meeting.
7. All committees will have one or more specific purposes and remits which will be identified when the committee is set up.
8. Committees do not have the authority to make decisions on behalf of the Council and must report their findings at monthly Council meetings for a final decision, unless the Council has expressly resolved to delegate specific authority to them.

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9. Committees may create advisory groups or working groups to deliver a specific objective. These groups will work within an agreed brief. These groups will be wound-up at the completion of their task.
10. All committees will be reviewed at the at the Annual Statutory Meeting in May to decide whether or not there remains a need for them to continue.
11. The meeting calendar of each committee will be agreed annually.

Signature: 
The Clerk

Date: 12th May 2025