

**Sandwich Town Council
Standing Orders Working Group Meeting**



Agenda

Chair: Cllr Black
Councillors: Breen, Csuka, Gray and Pennington

Members are hereby cordially invited to attend a Standing Orders Working Group Meeting in the Council Chamber, Guildhall on **Thursday 22nd June 2023 at 10:30** to transact the business on the agenda below.

Date: **16th June 2023**
Gill Gray: Interim Town Clerk

1	Apologies for absence received:	
2	Declarations of interest: To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests from Members in respect of business to be transacted on the agenda.	
3	Minutes of the SO Working Group To receive and approve the minutes as an accurate record of the SO Working Group meeting held on 15 th June 2023 and to consider any matters arising from those minutes not covered elsewhere in this Agenda: Decision required	Attach 1
4	Public Participation: A 15-minute session is set aside for members of the public to make representations at the meeting in respect of the business on the agenda. Individual representations should not exceed 3 minutes. (Written notice of the desire to exercise the right to speak, together with the topic to be addressed, must be given to the Interim Town Clerk prior to 4pm on the Monday preceding the meeting).	
5	Standing Orders Members to continue to work on the draft Standing Orders.	
6	Date of next SO Working Group Meeting: TBC	

Draft minutes of the Standing Orders Working Party meeting held on 15th June 2023

Present:

1. Present

In Attendance:

Cllr Ian Black (Chair) IB

Cllr Peter Breen PB

Cllr Emmet Csuka EC

Cllr Nicholas Gray NC

Cllr Martin Pennington MP

Ms. Christina Glynn (CG) was present to video the proceedings and contributed to the discussions.

No other members of the public attended.

2. Apologies for Absence. None.

3. Public Participation. None

4. Minutes:

MP pointed out that there was an error in the date on the minute: this was corrected, and the minutes were accepted.

5. Open Discussion

5.1 the meeting discussed version 4 of the working document. Comments and corrections had been received from RS, and where these were statutory requirements, they had been included. In addition, PB and NG had reviewed version 3 and amended any incorrect numbering or incorrect boldening/normal text to ensure the statutory items were correct and distinguished from the non-statutory text.

5.2 the meeting discussed what to report to the next STC meeting: another meeting in a week's time would be too late for incorporation into the Council's meeting papers. The meeting suggested a *verbal* update would suffice, including:

- There had been 3 meetings, characterised by full participation from all councillors present.
- Progress to date had been slower than thought, but that this was because the deliberations had been very thorough, robust, and comprehensive. This approach would form the basis for a very good outcome, which could withstand scrutiny from any source.

- It was essential to get the legislative aspects right: some earlier documents had been less thorough, and NALC had recently changed some of its wording, all of which required through Quality Assurance processes.
- The meeting was unanimous in rejecting copying the non-statutory aspects of NALC. STC needed its own customised procedures, just as some other councils had done.
- The WP sought confirmation from STC that this was the appropriate route to follow.
- Input had been taken from CG and RS: the latter had been very helpful in ensuring the statutory aspects were correct and up to date. CG had helped with many current examples based her extensive feedback from the live stream broadcasts.

5.3 IB suggested the document map be included in the council feedback to illustrate the rigorous approach and to point ways for any subsequent Working Parties to work to a common approach. This was *agreed*.

5.4 The participants recapped what they were seeking to do...first create a proper statutory framework for STC, then review the fit of any heritage documents with this and 5.3, and third make a process which was as user-friendly as practicable for councillors and residents.

5.5 The WP suggested a simplified short guide could be written for residents based on 5.4 which would allow them to know what to expect, and what was required of them. This was *agreed*.

5.6 The legislation requires councils to elect a leader, but not a Mayor *per se*. Sandwich had, for many historical reasons combined the role of council leader and Mayor: the WP believed this should continue.

5.7 The WP confirmed that the *minimum* notice period for meetings should be 3 "clear" days, as per the legislation for *Council* meetings, but this standard practice should also to all committees, sub-committees and working parties to avoid confusion and misunderstandings.

5.8 The meeting discussed document control: NALC procedures were not being wholly followed by STC for *Council* meetings: the use of electronic signatures, verification and document version control needed further exploration for all minutes generated by councillors.

5.9 The meeting wanted the minuting format to be altered to add an action log, recording how far an agreed resolution had progressed, which actions were complete, and who was responsible for what action, and in what timescale.

5.10 the quorum for a meeting, apart from a *Council* meeting (where a legislative minimum is required) should be identified in the terms of reference for that committee, sub-committee, Working Party or specific one-off meeting.

5.11 A code of conduct applied to all participants in a meeting.

5.12 section 4.6.2 of the draft document required a rewrite.

6. Next steps

Public participation issues should be a major focus of the next meeting.

The Chair thanked the participants and CG for their input to the day's meeting.

Draft