

# 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 13th July 2023 at 10:30** to transact the business on the agenda below.

Date: **7th July 2023**  
Gill Gray: Interim Town Clerk

1	<b>Apologies for absence received:</b>	
2	<b>Declarations of interest:</b> To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests from Members in respect of business to be transacted on the agenda.	
3	<b>Minutes of the SO Working Group</b> To receive and approve the minutes as an accurate record of the SO Working Group meeting held on 6 <sup>th</sup> July 2023 and to consider any matters arising from those minutes not covered elsewhere in this Agenda: <b>Decision required</b>	<b>Attach 1</b>
4	<b>Public Participation:</b> 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	<b>Standing Orders</b> Members to finalise the review of the draft Standing Orders and to prepare a key paper for Sandwich Town Council meeting on 31 <sup>st</sup> July 2023.	
6	<b>Date of next SO Working Group Meeting: TBC</b>	

**Draft minutes of the Standing Orders Working Party meeting held on 6th July 2023**

**1. In Attendance:**

Cllr Ian Black (Chair) IB  
Cllr Emmet Csuka EC  
Cllr Nicholas Gray NG  
Cllr Martin Pennington MP  
Town Clerk Gill Gray GG

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

No other members of the public attended

**2. Apologies for Absence:**

Cllr Peter Breen and RFO Karen Palmer

**3. Public Participation:**

None

**4. Previous Meeting's Minutes:**

The minutes from the previous meeting were accepted.

**5. Open Discussion:**

The meeting discussed version 6 of the working document. A number of questions had been sent to GG prior to the meeting and these were covered in the first part of the meeting.

The group agreed that the Financial Regulations should be included as part of the Standing Orders as this was best practice. MP asked how any changes to the regulations would be reflected in the document and was advised by GG that any future changes would require the updated Standing Orders to be referred to the Town Council to agree.

The group discussed section 9 of the Standing Orders and it was agreed that paragraphs 9.1.1, 9.1.2 and 9.1.3 should remain in the document with paragraphs 9.1.4 and 9.1.5 being removed. The Standing Orders were updated to reflect this.

In response to the question of what does NALC provide to Sandwich Town Council on legislative changes to the Standing Orders, GG advised the group that all Councillors have access to the KALC/ NALC websites which they can use to keep informed of all related changes to the NALC version of Standing Orders.

GG also advised the group that she would be asking the Town Council to consider agreeing to SLCC (Society Of Local Council Clerks) as this would

provide, amongst other things, a rich source of other information relevant to the Standing Orders.

The group had asked GG for clarification on the role of the Proper Officer and whether this could be a role assigned to the Responsible Finance Officer (RFO). GG clarified that the role of the Proper Officer related to the Town Clerk and that the RFO position is a separate role for Sandwich Town Council.

It was agreed that paragraph 15.a of the NALC version of the Standing Orders would be added alongside paragraph 2.3.2 in the document. **IB to incorporate this into the document.**

On the question of whether to standardise the notice period required for all meetings and the issue of related documents such as agendas, reports etc. It was agreed that all meetings should have a minimum notice period of 3 clear days, but the wording should be expanded to recommend that notice and supporting documents should be delivered earlier than 3 days, whenever possible. **IB agreed to reflect this in the Standing Orders.**

The group had a full discussion on how to reflect public participation in Town Council meetings in the document.

It was agreed that the Town Council would be asked to decide on this issue but that the proposed wording in the document should be revised to show an allowance of 5 minutes for each member of the public to speak with a maximum of 20 minutes allocated to this part of the agenda.

The wording should also reflect that a member of the public should disclose that they wanted to speak prior to the start of the meeting but advance receipt of any written contribution to support their participation would be welcome.

Further discussion on how best to facilitate this participation resulted in GG to look at how this was reflected in the Westgate-On-Sea Council's Standing Orders. **GG to take this action and advise IB**

A discussion on the archiving of meeting minutes and how to allow public access to them confirmed that minutes of previous meetings are available via the Town Council website and, in addition, members of the public are entitled to visit the Council Offices to view hard copies of previous meeting's minutes.

The group then went on to discuss how amendments to minutes of meetings should be handled and it was agreed that, when an amendment is requested, the originator of the request should provide a suggested set of words to the Town Clerk and the chair of the meeting to consider, in advance of the next meeting.

A discussion on the Document Overview, circulated at the last Town Council meeting, confirmed that the overview was a valuable addition that should be adopted for use. This led to agreement that the three key documents that fell

within the corpse of the working group to consider are the Standing Orders, the Schedule Of Delegations and the Financial Regulations. It was agreed that the focus of the group's attentions, for now, should remain with the Standing Orders.

After some discussion on allowing Town Councillors to question DDC and KCC Councillors as part their giving updates to Town Council meetings, **IB agreed to reword Section 6 of the Standing Orders to include how we would want to include questions to the KCC and DDC Councillors as part of their monthly updates.**

The final discussion focused on section 3.1.6 and how Councillors, who were not formal members of a committee, could participate in the meetings of the committee. It was agreed that the wording of this section should remain as currently drafted.

At this point GG advised the meeting that she needed to leave the meeting but that that she had two further feedback comments to provide and would do this by writing to IB. **GG to take this action and advise IB**

#### **6. End of meeting**

The Chair thanked the participants and CG for their input to the day's meeting. It was agreed that the group would meet again on 13<sup>th</sup> July at 10.30am and would continue to focus on the standing Orders in preparation for providing the report into the Town Council meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> July.