

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 7th September 2023 at 09:30** to transact the business on the agenda below.

Date: **1st September 2023**

Gill Gray: 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 31st August 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	Code of Conduct for Sandwich Town Council Members to continue to consider and develop a draft Code of Conduct for Sandwich Town Council based on the three models: Kent Code of Conduct, the Local Government Association version, and the National Association of Local Councils template.	
6	Date of next meeting: TBC	

Draft Minutes of the Standing Orders Working Party meeting held on 31st August 2023

1. In Attendance:

Cllr Ian Black (Chair) IB
Cllr Peter Breen PB
Cllr Emmet Csuka EC
Cllr Nicholas Gray NG

Cllr. Simon Mallet (SM) was present to video the proceedings, and also contributed to the discussions.

No other members of the public attended

2. Apologies for Absence:

Cllr Martyn Pennington who was travelling

3. Public Participation:

None

4. Previous Meeting's Minutes:

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

5. Standing Orders:

PB had been disappointed at the negative response of some councillors to the Standing Orders discussed at STC on 21/8/23. He asked if the WG could review the written comments received from two councillors, to ascertain if the WG was satisfied that it had fully and properly considered their points. He had developed a matrix of their questions, what solutions the WG had produced and whether or not it was appropriate to make some changes.

All of the suggestions were discussed at length. After reaching an agreed position on each comment, it was agreed that the Chair (IB) would circulate this matrix to all councillors and the TC. It was important that all councillors understood that the WG had carefully considered the points initially, and had again reviewed them.

6. Code of Conduct for Sandwich Town Council:

The WG considered the 3 model codes of Conduct – viz. the “Kent” model currently used by Dover DDC and Sandwich TC, the NALC model or the LGA model. There were advantages and disadvantages for each, but there was also considerable overlap. After much discussion, the WG decided to opt for the LGA model, customised for STC, and making greater use of appendices to help with the flow of the core text. NG pointed out that in a recent survey, 65 % of councils had now adopted a variant of the LGA model.

The rest of the meeting was concerned with progressing this approach, but reducing much of the unnecessary explanatory commentary and concentrating on the core essentials. It was also agreed to remove the first person singular approach (e.g. I endeavour to....) and replace it with the third person plural (e.g. Councillors will...)

It was agreed to reconvene next week to attempt to complete the CoC: once a draft was completed the Chair would circulate it to all councillors and the TC, well before the next STC meeting to allow for comments to be received and considered.

Draft