

# 11 Annexes to Winterbourne Parish Council Standing Orders

Adopted April 2022

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## **11.1 Procedures for co-option to fill council vacancies**

- a. The Parish Council has a duty to fill vacancies by co-option as soon as practicable, when such vacancies are not being filled by bye-election.

### **Publicity**

- b. Vacancies will be advertised locally through the Parish Council and community noticeboards, the parish website and through other means as available.
- c. Vacancy notices shall include contact details for the Clerk, and for the Chairman or another councillor.
- d. Effort may be made to encourage applications that strengthen the extent to which the Council is demographically and geographically representative of the community.
- e. Vacancy notices shall specify a closing date for expressions of interest, and specify the date for the Parish Council meeting at which applications will be considered.
- f. The Parish Council may advertise a vacancy for co-option concurrent with the statutory public notification (see Standing Order 2c), but should extend beyond the 14 day statutory notification period and cross refer to it (see sample vacancy notice below).

### **Communication with candidates**

- g. All persons expressing interest should contact, or be referred to, the Clerk.
- h. Before a candidate can be considered for co-option, they must provide to the Clerk personal contact details and confirm their eligibility for the Council.
- i. Candidates should be encouraged to provide a personal statement, which may include their reasons for wishing to join the Council, and details of skills and experience that could be relevant to the role.
- j. A template for required and optional information is below.
- k. Candidates should be encouraged to speak informally with a councillor(s).

### **Procedures for co-option**

- l. Co-option must be by a vote at a meeting of the Parish Council (see Standing Order 5.1m).
- m. A successful candidate must have received an absolute majority vote of those present and voting. If there are more than two candidates for one vacancy and no one of them at first count receives a majority, then the candidate with the least votes is eliminated and the remainder put to the vote again.
- n. If the Council has more than one vacancy, each vacancy must be filled by a separate vote or series of votes.
- o. Successful candidates, if present at the meeting at which they have been co-opted, may join the Council as a member immediately subject to signing a declaration of acceptance of office.

## Example vacancy notice



### *Winterbourne Parish Council Vacancy*

Becoming a Parish Councillor gives you a great opportunity to get involved and influence issues which directly affect the local community, these include:

- The spending of money on highway and community projects
- Giving your views on planning applications in the villages
- Working with Wiltshire Council, the police and neighbouring parishes to help to resolve local problems and issues
- Helping local organisations with funding and ideas
- Having a say in what play equipment is installed in the village play areas and how the footpaths are improved
- Helping to keep the villages safe in adverse weather

A vacancy notice is displayed on our website and noticeboards, and the Parish Council is free to fill the vacancy through co-option [unless a poll is requested by *[date]* by ten or more electors of the parish].

We would therefore like to hear from any resident interested in joining the Parish Council. We are keen to ensure that the Council is representative of the diversity of our community, and welcome interest from residents who can add to this. If you would like more information please contact the Chairman *[details]* or speak with any of the other councillors.

Please register your interest with the Parish Clerk *[details]* by *[date]*

[www.winterbourneparishcouncil.com](http://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.com)

**Template for candidate information**

Full name of candidate	
Home address (in full)	
Telephone number(s) & email address	
Eligibility criteria - Indicate YES to all that apply	
(a) I am registered as a local government elector for the area of the parish named above	
(b) I have, during the whole of the preceding 12 months occupied as owner or tenant land or other premises in the parish named above	
(c) my principal or only place of work during the preceding 12 months has been in the parish named above	
(d) I have during the whole of the preceding 12 months resided in the parish named above or within 4.8 kilometres of it.	
Personal statement (optional) – may include reason(s) for applying to join the Council; description of skills and experience relevant to the work of the Parish Council and community	

I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief I am not disqualified for being elected by reason of any disqualification set out in, or decision made under, section 80 of the Local Government Act 1972 or section 34 of the Localism Act 2011 <i>[copies to be provided]</i>				
Date of birth:		Signature:		Date of consent:

## 11.2 The Role of the chairman<sup>1</sup>

The main rules of law governing the role of the chairman of a parish council are set out in the Local Government Act 1972, principally within Schedule 12, which sets out, for example:

- that the chairman must preside at a meeting of the parish council if he or she is present; and
- that it is the person who presided at the meeting who has the responsibility to sign the minutes as a true record.

It is the duty of the chairman “to preserve order, and to take care that the proceedings are conducted in a proper manner, and that the sense of the meeting is properly ascertained with regard to any question which is properly before the meeting” *National Dwellings Society v Sykes (1894)*

It is the purpose of the Council's proceedings to reach, without unreasonable delay, an intelligible and lawful decision for the right reasons. The whole duty of a chairman is to ensure that this purpose is achieved and to this end he must:

- protect the Council against outside interference;
- ensure that everything to be discussed is lawful;
- ensure that the Council is invited to deal with clear issues;
- ensure that as far as possible information is complete;
- permit every point of view to have a fair hearing;
- ensure that opinions expressed are relevant to the matter in hand;
- ensure that business is transacted with reasonable speed;
- ensure as far as possible that proceedings are friendly and free from personalities; and
- co-operate with the officer(s) and councillors.

It is also the chairman's responsibility:

- a) To determine that the meeting is properly constituted and that a quorum is present;
- b) To inform himself as to the business and objects of the meeting;
- c) To preserve order in the conduct of those present;
- d) To confine discussion within the scope of the meeting and reasonable limits to time;
- e) To decide whether proposed motions and amendments are in order;
- f) To formulate for discussion and decision questions which have been moved for the consideration of the meeting;
- g) To decide points of order and other incidental questions which require decision at the time;
- h) To ascertain the sense of the meeting by:
  - a. Putting relevant questions to the meeting and taking the vote thereon (and if so minded giving a casting vote);
  - b. Declaring the result; and

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Governance Toolkit for Parish and Town Councils 2009 (<http://askyourcouncil.uk/documents/Governance-Toolkit-2009.pdf>) and Guidelines for Parish Council Operation Brown Edge Parish Council 2015 ([https://browncage-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/guidelines\\_for\\_parish\\_council\\_operation.pdf](https://browncage-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/guidelines_for_parish_council_operation.pdf)).

- c. Causing a ballot to be taken if duly demanded;
- i) To approve the draft of the minutes or other record of proceedings (with the
- j) consent of the meeting);
- k) To adjourn the meeting when circumstances justify or require that course; and
- l) To declare the meeting closed when its business has been completed.

*“Knowles on Local Authority Meetings” (ICSA Publishing)*

## **Voting**

During the meeting, if a vote on a matter is tied, the chairman, or other person presiding, has a second or casting vote.

The chairman's term of office continues until the appointment of a successor, other than where the chairman resigns or is disqualified. This continuity also applies when the chairman has not been re-elected following local elections. In this case, the chairman does not have a vote on the appointment of a successor but does have a casting vote in the event of equal votes.

## **Outside of the Meeting**

The chairman:

- is the person to whom notice of resignation is given by other Councillors or the Clerk;
- may convene meetings of the council (on proper notice to the Clerk);
- when attending ceremonial events, is the proper person to represent the parish; and
- may receive an allowance to meet the expenses of his or her office, the amount to be agreed by the council as a part of the council's annual budget.

Beyond that, any workings and decisions that have not been taken by the council, through the delegation scheme, or by one of its committees or sub-committees are to be taken to the next meeting of the parish council.

The chairman may have an enhanced role, as functions may be delegated to the Clerk in consultation with the chairman (or the chairman of a committee). This means that the decision and the responsibility for it remains with the Clerk (not the chairman) but that he or she must first bring the matter to the attention of the chairman and take into account the views of the chairman in coming to his or her decision.

It is also likely to be the case that the chairman will be the person whom the Clerk will approach;

- for information about the council and the parish;
- to seek to informally discuss matters with; and
- to informally consult on decisions that are in the Clerk's remit to make or pass back to a formal meeting.

### 11.3 Preparation for, content and records of Council meetings (SOP)

- a. In practice the Council holds its Annual Meeting in May of each year, and ordinary meetings in each month except for May and August.
- b. The Clerk shall circulate by email a draft of meeting agenda in reasonable time prior to publication specifying the dates for publication and for receipt of items for inclusion.
- c. The agenda shall be published on the parish website and main Parish Council noticeboard, and distributed to members by email, at least three days before the meeting, and in the form as set out in the Local Government Act 1972. Parish Council meetings are commonly held on Wednesday, such that the agenda shall be published no later than the Friday of the week prior.
- d. To ensure that council members have sufficient time to prepare for the meeting, and that decisions are taken on a properly informed basis, all relevant information (agenda, briefing papers, tender documents, proposals etc.) must be available to all members and officers by the earlier of (i) the last working day of the week prior to the meeting or (ii) time of publication of meeting summons and agenda.
- e. Where the conditions set out in (c) above are not met the matter will be deferred to the next meeting of the Council. The Chairman may agree to consideration of the matter subject to the provisions at Standing Order 5.1 (c).
- f. The table below sets out the format and usual content for ordinary meetings of the Council.

1.	Apologies for absence – to receive and accept apologies
2.	Declarations of interest – those not recorded in the published register of interests, or matters directly relevant to business of the meeting
3.	Minutes of the previous meeting(s) - to approve as a correct record
4.	Questions from the public
5.	Reports from <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Chairman</li> <li>ii. Unitary Councillor</li> <li>iii. Area Board, CATG, other Wiltshire Council meetings (if any)</li> <li>iv. Clerk (to include Glebe lands booking, forthcoming meetings)</li> <li>v. Members (report of business conducted since last meeting)</li> <li>vi. other</li> </ol>
6.	Matters arising from previous meeting(s)
7.	Maintenance to include items as below: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Review of the Council’s maintenance log</li> <li>ii. Parish Steward - consideration of jobs for next visit</li> </ol>
8.	Development planning: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To respond to consultations on planning applications</li> </ol>

ii. Other planning matters as required
9. Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Approval of monthly financial summary supported by bank statement</li> <li>ii. Invoices &amp; expense claims requiring Council approval</li> <li>iii. Other invoices &amp; expense claims received since the previous meeting (for information)</li> </ul>
10. Governance which may include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Review and adoption of Council policies, procedures, regulations and orders</li> <li>ii. Risk assessment and management</li> <li>iii. Budget development and adoption</li> <li>iv. Audit (including the Annual Accountability &amp; Governance Return - AGAR)</li> </ul>
11. Other business of the Parish Council by portfolio as may be needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Publications</li> <li>ii. Community resilience and crime prevention, including Speedwatch</li> <li>iii. Glebe Hall and car park, including associated leases</li> <li>iv. Amenities (sport &amp; recreation, allotments)</li> <li>v. Community engagement</li> <li>vi. Transport</li> </ul>
12. Correspondence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. from residents</li> <li>ii. other</li> </ul>
13. Confirmation of date of next meeting
14. To close the meeting

g. At every meeting other than the Annual Meeting the first business shall be to appoint a chairman for the meeting if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are absent.

h. Documents and other files (including email) relevant to the agenda of a Parish Council meeting should be compiled by the clerk in a dedicated online folder and shared with all members and officers within the timescale set out at (d) above. Files within this folder should be numbered and named to align with the meeting agenda.

i. *[deleted]*

j. The minutes of a meeting shall include an accurate record of the following:

- i. the time and place of the meeting;
- ii. the names of councillors who are present and the names of councillors who are absent including the reason for absence if known;
- iii. interests that have been declared by councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
- iv. the grant of dispensations (if any) to councillors and non-councillors with voting rights;
- v. whether a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights left the meeting when matters that they held interests in were being considered;

- vi. if there was a public participation session;
  - vii. the decisions made and, if so requested by any member, the manner in which each member voted on a particular question; and
  - viii. the actions agreed, to whom attributed and the expected date for completion. When actions are accepted by more than one person, the minutes should record the individual who will lead.
- k. Minutes shall be published on the parish website and main Parish Council noticeboard in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Transparency Requirements) (England) Regulations 2015.
- l. Minutes and relevant supplementary documents will be retained as set out in the Council's Document Retention and Publication Policy.
- m. The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council shall include the following business, following the election of the Chairman of the Council and appointment of the Vice-Chairman (if there is one) of the Council:
- i. Delivery by the Chairman of the Council and (in an election year) councillors of their acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;
  - ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last (ordinary) meeting of the Council;
  - iii. Review of delegation arrangements;
  - iv. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;
  - v. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses;
  - vi. In an election year, to make arrangements with a view to the Council becoming eligible to exercise the general power of competence in the future;
  - vii. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;
  - viii. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;
  - ix. Agree schedule for rolling annual review of all of the Council's policies, procedures and practices (see Annex 11.6);
  - x. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 or the general power of competence.
  - xi. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.
  - xii. Other ordinary business (see (f) above) as may be necessary and subject to time available.

## 11.4 Motions and voting procedures (SOP)

(extracted from NALC model standing orders, 2018)

### 1. Rules of debate at meetings

- a A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.
- b A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chairman of the meeting as withdrawn.
- c If a motion (including an amendment) has been seconded, it may be withdrawn by the proposer only with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.
- d Unless permitted by the chairman of the meeting, a councillor may speak once in the debate on a motion except:
  - i. to speak on an amendment moved by another councillor;
  - ii. to move or speak on another amendment if the motion has been amended since he last spoke;
  - iii. to make a point of order;
  - iv. to give a personal explanation; or
  - v. to exercise a right of reply.
- e During the debate on 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 other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting he is concerned by.
- f A point of order shall be decided by the chairman of the meeting and his decision shall be final.
- g When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:
  - vi. to amend the motion;
  - vii. to proceed to the next business;
  - viii. to adjourn the debate;
  - ix. to put the motion to a vote;
  - x. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;
  - xi. to exclude the public and press;
  - xii. to adjourn the meeting; or
  - xiii. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.
- h Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chairman of the meeting shall be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated and that the mover of the motion under debate has exercised or waived his right of reply.

**1. Motions for a meeting that require written notice to be given to the proper officer**

- a A motion shall relate to the responsibilities of the meeting for which it is tabled and in any event shall relate to the performance of the Council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the Council's area or its residents.
- b No motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is on the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Proper Officer at least 5 clear days before the meeting. Clear days do not include the day of the notice or the day of the meeting.
- c The Proper Officer may, before including a motion on the agenda received in accordance with paragraph 2(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion. If the wording of a motion received is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion resubmits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least 3 clear days before the meeting.
- d If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chairman of the forthcoming meeting or, as the case may be, the councillors who have convened the meeting, to consider whether the motion shall be included in the agenda or rejected.
- e Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

**2. Motions at a meeting that do not require written notice**

- a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice:
  - i. to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes of a meeting;
  - ii. to move to a vote;
  - iii. to defer consideration of a motion;
  - iv. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;
  - v. to change the order of business on the agenda;
  - vi. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;
  - vii. to require a written report;
  - viii. to extend the time limits for speaking;
  - ix. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;
  - x. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;
  - xi. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;
  - xii. to temporarily suspend the meeting;
  - xiii. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);
  - xiv. to adjourn the meeting; or
  - xv. to close the meeting.

## 11.5 Portfolio business management

Adopted July 2021, amended April 2022

Portfolio	Responsible councillor (second)	Key tasks	Key relationships
Governance and finance	Charles Penn (Peter Biggins)	Oversight of finance and accounts Compliance (legal, records/archive, financial etc.) Development and review of policies, standing orders	Works closely with Clerk on all aspects Internal auditor
Publications	Charles Penn	Development and implementation of publication policy (part of record/archives) Support Village Link publication & distribution* Development and implementation of new community website	Clerk Village Link editor Web developer/editor
Maintenance	Roy Judd (Chris Judd)	Management of primary grounds maintenance contract Implement additional <i>ad hoc</i> grounds maintenance as approved by Parish Council	Maintenance contractor Wiltshire Council highways (inc. Parish Steward and StreetScene)
Planning	Charlie Bruce-White	Monitor planning applications and brief PC accordingly. Review & coordinate response to regional and national planning strategies and consultations. Monitor CIL/s106 entitlements. Link to Neighbourhood Plan.	WC Planning Department Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group*
Community resilience and crime prevention	Peter Biggins (Roy Judd – flood warden)	Development & review of Winterbourne Community Resilience Plan Oversight/lead on Speedwatch, use of CCTV	Amesbury Community Police Team CBRN Centre Speedwatch Team Leader* Neighbourhood Watch
Glebe Hall & Glebe Hall car park	Adrian Burrows	Represent WPC as custodian trustee of Glebe Hall. Role includes oversight/liaison of contract relationships with Diocese and Kindred BVNS as these are all interlinked. Liaison with Winterbourne Earls Primary School.	Glebe Hall Management Committee & its chairman (Graham Lloyd) Salisbury Diocese (through Strutt & Parker) Kindred BVNS Primary School
Sport & recreation facilities, community engagement	Nikki Palmer (Joy Harrison)	Development and use of sport and recreation equipment and grounds Community consultations and meetings, inc. use of social media Community (maintenance) days*	Sport and youth clubs and other groups/organisations Link to portfolio leads for maintenance
Allotment Manager	Roy Judd (Charles Penn)	Management of the statutory allotment site Down Barn Road	Clerk Allotment garden tenants
Transport	Joy Harrison (Charlie Bruce-White)	Rights of way Cycle route(s) Public transport	Wilts Council (Rights of way officer, lead on Salisbury/Porton cycle route)

\*activities that involve volunteers – see Annex 11.10

## 11.6 Schedule for rolling annual review of all of the Council's policies

Draft, for completion and presentation to Annual Parish Council meeting May 2022 as specified at Annex 1.3m

Document	Review period (years)	Last review	Next review	Meeting (month)
Standing Orders*	1	18/5/22	18/5/23	May
Financial Regulations*	1	18/5/22	18/5/23	May
Contract and service agreements*	1	19/5/22	19/5/23	May
Register of Community Assets	1		30/12/00	Dec
Code of Conduct		16/3/22		
Risk Register	1	19/1/22	19/1/23	Jan
Alloments Policy	1	16/2/22	16/2/23	Feb
Allotment Rules and Guidance	1	16/2/22	16/2/23	Feb
Pension Policy				
Appraisal Policy		16/3/22		
Disciplinary Policy		16/3/22		
Grievance Policy				
Document Retention and Publication Policy				
Complaints Policy				
Financial Reserves Policy				
Donations Policy				
Use of Car Parks Policies				
Use of Glebe Lands Policy				
Village Link Publication Plan				
CCTV Policy Statement				
Community Resilience Plan				
Grounds Maintenance Plan				
Freedom of Information Policy		16/3/22		
* For review at Annual Parish Council Meeting				

## 11.7 Receipt, review and response to correspondence from residents (SOP)

It is in the best interests of residents and the Council that correspondence from residents of the parish are addressed by a parish councillor, being one of their elected representatives. The procedures set out herein are designed to achieve this, as well as to ensure effective use of the time of all councillors and the clerk.

- a. Correspondence may take the form of letter, electronic communication (email, website form, text, etc.), or verbal communication.
- b. The recipient shall ensure that correspondence is complete before forwarding or acting on it. Correspondence must include name, address, a phone number and an email address (if available). Sufficient information should also be included so that the subject is clear and can be responded to or acted upon.
- c. Correspondence will normally be received in the first instance by the clerk. Once the correspondence is deemed complete (as in (b) above), the clerk should forward it to the most appropriate councillor (cc: to other members of the Council) who will likely be determined by the portfolio task within which the matter lies. Where the attribution of responsibility is not clear, or if the correspondence relates to matters set out in i to j below, the clerk will consult with the Chairman.
- d. Requests for information may be dealt with by the clerk. Communication that is relevant only to specific functions should be forwarded accordingly (e.g. Glebe Hall, Village Link, website, Speedwatch etc.)
- e. The clerk should acknowledge the correspondence and inform the respondent to whom the matter has been forwarded (cc: to the designated councillor only).
- f. The designated councillor should then contact the respondent and address the matter raised as appropriate. If necessary the councillor will refer the matter to the next meeting of the Parish Council with proposals for action as required.
- g. When correspondence is directed in the first instance to a councillor, the councillor may choose to respond as set out in (f) above, or forward the communication to the clerk. Such correspondence should nevertheless be reported to the Parish Council as set out in (h) below.
- h. Correspondence received since the previous meeting shall be included in the agenda for each Parish Council meeting and the designated councillor or the clerk will report to the Council on actions taken or required.
- i. It is not necessary or efficient for all councillors to be copied on all correspondence. In most cases the inclusion of the initial correspondence in the meeting agenda, with a report from the designated councillor or clerk, will be sufficient.

The following types of correspondence are covered by other policies and procedures, which will take precedence over the procedures set out in c-g above.

- j. Complaints against the Council, councillors or council officers shall be addressed in accordance with the Parish Council Complaints Policy<sup>2</sup>.
- k. Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 or request to inspect documents under the Local Government Act 1972 or Openness of Local Government Regulations 2014 shall be addressed as set out in the relevant section of WPC Standing Orders.

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<sup>2</sup> Available at <http://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.com/governance/winterbournes-policies.php>

## 11.8 Template for Parish Council maintenance log

### Winterbourne Parish Council: MAINTENANCE LOG (ML)

Issue/Maintenance task	Allocation (Cllr/officer)	Action(s) taken	Schedule/Outcome
<b>For review/decision</b>			
<b>Allocated to community days or other voluntary action</b>			
<b>Allocated to Parish Steward</b> <b>Future visit dates: 20<sup>th</sup> January (6<sup>th</sup> January), 17<sup>th</sup> February (3<sup>rd</sup> February), 17<sup>th</sup> March (3<sup>rd</sup> March), 14<sup>th</sup> April (31<sup>st</sup> March)</b> <i>(deadline for submission of forms in red)</i>			
<b>Referred to Parish Council contractor</b>			
<b>Referred to Wiltshire Council (monitor and follow up as necessary)</b>			

MAINTENANCE LOG WPC.DOCX – LAST UPDATED [date]

## 11.9 Procedures for response to planning consultation: communication with developers & residents (SOP)

- a. The Parish Council is not a planning authority, and does not therefore take decisions on planning applications. The Council can however influence planning decisions through its response to planning consultations, representation to planning committees of the planning authority (Wiltshire Council), and through its Neighbourhood Plan.
- b. It is important that the Parish Council remains objective and considers the parish as a whole in its dealing with planning applications. The procedures and guidance set out below are designed to support this and are supplementary to Standing Orders 6.6. See also the Council's Code of Conduct<sup>5</sup>.

### Declarations of interest

- c. There is a high likelihood that councillors may have some degree of personal interest in an application for development within the parish given the size of the settlements and social or business connections. The key consideration in determining whether such interest may represent a conflict is the extent to which it may bias (or be perceived to bias) the contribution that the councillor makes to discussion and decision.
- d. The following interests, for which dispensation may be withheld<sup>3</sup>, must be declared:
  - i. Direct interest in a planning application which may be considered pecuniary. This includes as applicant, land owner, or where the proposed development may affect the value of their property.
  - ii. Interest in a planning application which may affect specifically their quality of life or the amenities that they enjoy. This will usually be due to its proximity to their property.
  - iii. Actions set out a (p) below, including a publicly stated position on the application.
- e. The following interests, for which dispensation may be considered, must be declared:
  - i. Communication with residents (acting as a councillor) as set out in (g) below.
  - ii. Any other interest in the application.
- f. In the event that a councillor has engaged in discussions with parishioners, development companies or agents, that fall outside the scope of the procedures and guidance set out below, this must be declared as an interest at any meeting of the Parish Council where the affected planning application is considered.

### Communication with residents

- g. Residents of the Parish, including planning applicants and others affected by proposed development, may expect and are entitled to communicate directly with parish councillors as their elected representatives. Councillors may therefore engage, individually or collectively, with their parishioners subject to the following considerations:
  - i. Councillors should limit responses to advice on planning process, policy and guidance. Information can be provided on factors relevant to an application such as local land designation, conservation areas, the Neighbourhood Plan and other relevant documents.

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<sup>3</sup> See Winterbourne Parish Council Code of Conduct available at <http://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.com/governance/winterbournes-code-conduct.php>

- ii. If applicable, care should be taken to engage equally with interested residents, so as not to appear aligned with a particular point of view.
- iii. Offering opinions on the acceptability of an application should be avoided.
- iv. A record should be kept of all such discussions which should include at least the date and names of those present.

### **Communication with development companies and agents**

- h. Councillors should not engage in direct discussion or correspondence with development companies or agents. Such organisations should be advised to communicate in writing with the Parish Clerk who shall forward the information to the Parish Council.
- i. The Parish Council may (but is not obliged to) agree to a meeting with development companies or agents.

### **Consideration of planning applications by the Parish Council**

- j. Planning applications will be considered at an ordinary meeting of the Parish Council, unless an extraordinary meeting is required as set out in Standing Order 6.6(b).
- k. Members of the public who wish to address the Council on a planning application should inform the Clerk two clear days prior to the meeting. The Chairman may allocate time at the Council meeting for such public representation subject to:
  - i. Priority will be given to residents of the Parish, and others directly affected by the proposed development.
  - ii. The planning applicant, if a resident of the Parish, will be notified of the request to address the Council and given the same opportunity.
  - iii. The Chairman's decision on speakers and time allocated to each will be final.
- l. Standing Order 5.1(n) shall apply to agreement on a Parish Council response to consultation on a planning application. A further or amended response shall otherwise only be considered if a planning application is revised or re-submitted to the planning authority who then re-opens or extends the consultation period.

### **Planning authority committee**

- m. The Parish Council will normally be permitted to present to the planning authority committee (currently the Wiltshire Council Southern Planning Committee) when the committee is considering a planning application for a development within the Parish.
- n. The Parish Council address to the committee should be written in advance and be based on the relevant consultation response(s) submitted by the Council to the planning authority.
- o. The text of the Council address, and councillor nominated to attend and present, shall be agreed with all eligible councillors which may be at an ordinary meeting of the Council, or informally. If necessary an extraordinary meeting of the Council may be convened as set out in Standing Order 5.4.

### **Councillor freedom of action**

- p. Any councillor may respond to consultation on a planning application in their own right as an individual, or engage in other activities related to such application, provided that they make it clear that they are acting in a personal capacity and make no reference to their position as a parish councillor.

### **11.10 Procedures for engagement with volunteers**

- a. To ensure that volunteers are covered by the Council's insurance policy (that includes public liability and accident insurance) all activities involving volunteers should be overseen by a designated parish councillor (see Annex 11.5).
- b. The designated councillor for an activity involving volunteers should ensure that the requirements set out below are applied, and should report to the Council on such activities.
- c. Volunteer activities that are provided by an organisation, or are operating under a scheme overseen by another party<sup>4</sup> are expected to follow the procedures of those organisations.
- d. Notwithstanding provision 11.10c, all activities involving volunteers shall include:
  - i. Clear description of the work to be undertaken, and safety briefing if applicable
  - ii. A risk assessment to identify any risks and how they will be managed.
  - iii. A register of participants/attendees for each event
  - iv. Provision of safety equipment and protective clothing when indicated by the risk assessment
- e. All volunteers under 16 years of age must be supervised at all times by an adult parent/ carer who is also enrolled as a volunteer.

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<sup>4</sup> Examples include Freemasons, Community Speed Watch, Neighbourhood Watch

## 11.11 Procedures and guidance for use of email (SOP)

### Parish Council email accounts

- a The Parish Council shall establish and maintain email accounts @thewinterbournes.org.uk as follows:
  - i. Role specific accounts for the Chairman and the Clerk. These accounts shall exist in perpetuity and will be handed on to successors in these roles.
  - ii. Individual accounts for other councillors. These will be deleted when the individual ceases to be a member of the Council. Access to councillor email accounts is restricted to individual users and must not be shared accounts or automatically forwarded to personal or household accounts.
  - iii. A general parish council email account that may be used by any officer or councillor in circumstances where information or access may need to be shared. These include for grant applications, reporting matters to Wiltshire Council or other authority.
  - iv. A website email address to be used for website associated communication.
- b Other email addresses may be added as required, up to the maximum available under the Parish Council's service subscription (currently 25).
- c Parish Council email accounts are solely for the purpose of conducting parish council business and may not be used for any other purpose.
- d Emails that appear to be spam, phishing email or suspicious for any reason must be deleted and not forwarded or replied to.
- e To maintain the Council's professional standards and public perception, all communication by email should be courteous, concise, clear and with correct use of English.

### Guidance for effective use of email

Councillors & officers may receive in excess of 3,000 email messages per year. Poor presentation, distribution and management of email can compromise productivity and effectiveness. For the Parish Council relevant factors include:

- A substantial majority of emails received by councillors are sent or forwarded by the Clerk, which diminishes that value of "sender" as a filter or guide to content.
- The Council does not have a uniform IT platform, and access to Parish Council email is determined by individual systems and preferences which may vary.

The following points may facilitate effective management of email, depending on the software and systems available. Desktop applications may provide more functions for mail management than a web browser and most also allow for offline management of email.

Sending or forwarding email –

- f Ensure that the "subject" line is relevant to the content of the email and informative and useful to the recipient. If necessary change the "subject" line when forwarding emails from elsewhere. Where relevant include a subject prefix that will help the recipient prioritise or filter the email (e.g. ACTION, AGENDA, FYI, URGENT)

- g Send the email only “to:” those expected to act, respond or who need to know the content. Others should be listed as “cc:”. Do not send emails “to:” a distribution list or group (including the whole Council) if it is only of relevance to some.
- h Consider grouping emails with a common theme (e.g. general information, agenda items) and send as attachments to one email periodically (such as weekly).
- i Forward an email thread once it has reached a conclusion, instead of forwarding each email in an exchange/conversation.
- j When sending or forwarding emails with substantial content, provide a short summary highlighting relevance to the Council and any actions or decisions that may be appropriate.
- k Avoid forwarding an email to anyone who is already a recipient.
- l Avoid unnecessary replies – it is better to reply promptly with a report of action taken or with the requested information, than to first acknowledge then respond. Do not use “reply all” unless you are sure all need to see your response.

#### Receiving email –

- m Consider use of software tools to automatically filter or format incoming mail (e.g. folder redirection, text colour). Some systems allow mail to be sorted by sender, addressee, subject key words etc.
- n Use flags and/or folders to group or prioritise mail.
- o Remove email that is no longer relevant, important or requiring action or response. This can be to subfolders, archive or bin/trash so that the inbox remains manageable.
- p As a general principle for time management, it is considered better practice to set aside time to both read and process email, than to frequently monitor incoming mail with the intention of processing at another time.

#### **General external email received by the Clerk**

The Clerk receives a substantial volume of email that is general information intended for the Council as a whole, as well as unsolicited email that may not be of direct relevance to the Council (including marketing & spam mail). The Clerk is expected and encouraged to use their judgement in handling such mail in the following ways:

- q Recognise email that is intended for the Clerk (and not necessarily the whole Council), and process accordingly.
- r Forward email only to those councillor(s) for whom it is most relevant, cc: others if needed.
- s Unsubscribe from bulletins, mail lists etc. that are not directly relevant to the Council. Individual councillors may subscribe to such lists if they wish.
- t Manage account preferences to eliminate unnecessary email, including marketing mail, newsletters etc.
- u When forwarding email to some or all councillors apply the points set out in the guidance for sending or forwarding email above.