

Section D (Committees)**Section D - Committees of the Full Council – Procedural Standing Orders**

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Section D (Committees)

Ordinary Meetings

1. (1) Ordinary meetings of all Committees will take place in County Hall, Preston, in accordance with a programme decided annually by the Full Council.
- (2) The Chair of a Committee, or the Committee by resolution, may alter the time, date or place of a meeting.

Extraordinary Meetings

2. The Chair of a Committee, or the Committee by resolution, may request the Chief Executive to call an Extraordinary Meeting of the Committee

Agenda

3. The Chief Executive shall issue an Agenda not less than five clear working days before a meeting.

Minutes

2. (1) The Chair will sign the minutes of the proceedings at the next suitable meeting to confirm that they are a correct record. The minutes of a meeting shall not be discussed other than in relation to their accuracy.
- (2) Where the next Committee meeting is an Extraordinary Meeting the minutes shall be signed at the next Ordinary meeting.
- (3) A record of each decision taken by Committees shall be available for public inspection at County Hall and on the Council's website as soon as reasonably practicable.

Chair of Meeting

5. Ordinarily the Chair and Deputy Chair shall be appointed by the Full Council annually. At every meeting Chair, if present, shall preside. If the Chair is absent, the Deputy Chair, if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and the Deputy Chair are absent, the Committee shall elect a Chair from one of its members for the duration of the meeting.

Chair's Interpretation and Application of Standing Orders

6. (1) The ruling of the Chair at any meeting, as to the interpretation and application of any of these Standing Orders, or as to the proceedings of the Committee, shall be final.
- (2) The Chair may be invited to explain or reconsider a ruling by any voting member. Once this has been provided, the Chair's ruling cannot be challenged further, other than by an order of the court.

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Chair Standing - Call to Order

7. If the Chair so directs or stands, a Councillor speaking must immediately be silent.

Interruption by a County Councillor or Co-opted member

8. (1) If a Councillor or a co-opted member persistently disregards the ruling of the Chair by behaving improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructs business, the Chair may move that the Councillor or Co-opted member be not heard further. If seconded, the motion will be voted on without discussion.
- (2) If the Councillor or Co-opted member continues to behave improperly after such a motion is carried, the Chair may move that either the Councillor or Co-opted member leaves the meeting or that the meeting is adjourned for a specified period. If seconded the motion will be voted on without discussion.

Interruption by a member of the public

9. If a member of the public interrupts the meeting the Chair will warn the person concerned. If he/she continues to interrupt the Chair will order his/her removal from the meeting room.

General Disturbance

10. If there is a general disturbance making orderly business impossible the Chair may adjourn the meeting for as long as he/she thinks necessary.

Quorum

11. The quorum of a meeting shall be a quarter of the whole number of voting members of the Committee. If at any time there is not a quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned for 15 minutes. If after that time there is still not a quorum, the meeting shall stand adjourned to a time fixed by the Chair or, if he/she does not fix a time, to the next ordinary meeting.

Committee Vacancies and Membership Changes

12. If a vacancy occurs on a Committee, it may be filled by the appointment of a Councillor who has been nominated in writing to the Director of Corporate Services by the appropriate Political Group Officer. A Councillor will not be able to take part in a Committee meeting or vote until the nomination has been received.

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Attendance at Meetings

13. (1) Subject to Standing Order 13(2) below, and to the provisions of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, and the Council's Access to Information Rules, a Councillor may attend as an observer a meeting of any Committee of which they are not a member. They may not speak without the consent of the Committee, or in any case vote.
- (2) Cabinet Members shall not be members of the Development Control Committee or the Regulatory Committee but shall be entitled to attend any part of a meeting of those Committees in accordance with Standing Order 13(1) above where a matter affecting their electoral division is under discussion.
- (3) Meetings of Committees shall have in attendance the relevant Executive Directors or their nominated representatives, in light of the items to be discussed.

Exclusion of Press and Public

14. (1) A Committee may exclude the press and other members of the public from a meeting during an item of business wherever it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during that item there would be disclosure to them of exempt or confidential information.
- (2) If any question arises at a meeting of any Committee as to the appointment, promotion, dismissal, salary, superannuation, or conditions of service, or as to the conduct of, any person employed by the County Council, such question shall not be the subject of discussion until the Committee has decided whether or not the power of exclusion of the public under the relevant statutory power shall be exercised.
- (3) The business which is the subject of a resolution under Standing Orders 14(1) or 14(2) below shall stand adjourned until all other business of the meeting has been transacted whereupon the press and other members of the public shall leave the meeting and the adjourned business shall then be considered.

Procedure for dealing with matters of Urgent Business which cannot await a Committee meeting

15. (1) The Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer and each Executive Director may deal with matters of urgency which cannot await a meeting of any Committee of the Full Council, following consultation with the appropriate Chair and Deputy Chair. The other party spokespersons should be informed of matters of urgency as soon as practicable after the decision has been made.

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- (2) The provisions at Standing Order 15(1) above shall be suspended in the period beginning with the fourth day after the County Council Elections and ending on the date of the first Annual Meeting of the new Council. During that period, the Chief Executive may deal with matters of urgency which cannot await a meeting of any Committee of the Full Council where delay would significantly and materially prejudice the interests of the County Council or the inhabitants of the County.
- (3) The Chief Executive shall only exercise the powers at Standing Order 15(2) above following consultation with the Leader (or in his/her absence, the Deputy Leader) of any political group with an overall majority, or if there is no majority political group, the Leader (or in his/her absence the Deputy Leader) of all political groups on the Council. In the event there is no Leader or Deputy Leader of any political group during that period, the Chief Executive shall consult with a representative or representatives of that group as he/she considers appropriate.

Procedure for dealing with matters of Urgent Business at meetings

16. An item of business not included on an Agenda shall only be considered where, by reason of special circumstances which shall be specified in the Minutes, the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Advice When Taking Decisions

17. Decisions shall be taken only after the decision taker has considered any advice given by the Chief Executive or any appropriate Executive Director or their nominated representatives.

Length of Speech

18. Members of a Committee may, at the discretion of the Chair, speak as often and for as long as the Chair allows.

Moving of Reports at Committee meetings

19. (1) Any Committee member may move the recommendations contained in a report at a Committee meeting. In doing so, Committee members may make amendments to the published recommendations.
- (2) Amendments to published recommendations must be relevant to the subject of the report
- (3) Recommendations moved in Committees must be seconded.

Voting

20. (1) Votes shall be by show of hands or by affirmation of the meeting.

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- (2) Subject to Standing Order 20(3) below, any matter will be decided by a simple majority of Councillors (and Co-opted members) entitled to vote and present in the room at the time the question was put.
- (3) Any six committee members including voting co-opted members may request a named vote and shall signify their wish for a named vote by a show of hands. The names for and against and those abstaining shall then be taken down in writing and recorded in the minutes.
- (4) Immediately after a vote is taken any Committee member (and Co-opted members) may request that it is recorded in the Minutes of that meeting how he/she voted, or abstained from voting,
- (5) The Chair of a meeting shall have, in case of equality of votes, a second or casting vote.

Point of Order

21. A Councillor (and Co-opted members) may raise a point of order at any time in relation to an alleged breach of a Standing Order or law and shall be entitled to be heard immediately. The Councillor (and Co-opted members) must specify the Standing Order or law and the way in which he or she considers it has been broken. The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order shall be final and not open to discussion.