

STOW MARIES PARISH COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

2018

Adopted Parish Council Meeting 15 July 2010
Amended Parish Council Meeting 16 September 2010
Amended Parish Council Meeting 17 November 2011
Amended Parish Council Meeting 21 January 2013
Amended Parish Council Meeting 17 March 2014
Amended Parish Council Meeting 20 October 2014
Change of Clerk 6 November 2017

All sections in **bold type** reflect statutory requirements (*see also Standing Order 26*)

1 GENERAL RULES CONCERNING MEETINGS

(a) Meetings shall not take place in premises, which at the time of the meeting, are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other premises are available free of charge or at a reasonable cost.

(b) When calculating the 3 clear days for notice of a meeting to councillors and the public, the day on which notice was issued, the day of the meeting, a Sunday, a day of the Christmas break, a day of the Easter break or of a bank holiday or a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning shall not count.

(c) Meetings shall be open to the public, unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion. (*See Standing Order 21*)

(d) The minutes of a meeting shall record the names of councillors present and absent.

(e) The code of conduct adopted by the Council shall apply to councillors in respect of the entire meeting (*see Standing Order 13 (a)*).

(f) An interest arising from the code of conduct adopted by the Council, the existence and nature of which is required to be disclosed by a Councillor at a meeting shall be recorded in the minutes.

(g) Meetings of the Council shall be held in each year on such dates and times and at such place as the Council may direct.

(h) Smoking is not permitted at any meeting of the Council.

2 THE STATUTORY ANNUAL MEETING

(a) In an election year the Annual Council Meeting shall be held on or within 14 days following the day on which the councillors elected take office.

(b) In a year which is not an election year the Annual Council Meeting shall be held on such a day in May as the Council may direct.

(c) If no other time is fixed, the annual meeting of the Council shall take place at 6pm.

(d) The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council shall be the first business completed at the annual meeting of the Council

(e) The Chairman of the Council , unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the Annual Meeting until his successor is elected at the next Annual Council Meeting.

(f) The Vice-Chairman of the Council, if any, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next Annual Council Meeting.

(g) In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a successor Chairman of the Council has been elected. The current Chairman of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council but must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

(h) In an election year, if the current Chairman of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, he shall preside at the meeting until a new Chairman of the Council has been elected. He may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chairman of the Council and must give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

(i) In an election year, to receive the Chairman of the Council and Councillors declaration of acceptance of office forms unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date. In a year which is not an election year, to receive the Chairman of the Council declaration of acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date.

(j) In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies left unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.

(k) In addition to the statutory Annual Council meeting at least three other ordinary meetings shall be held in each year on such dates and times and at such place as the Council may direct.

3 PROPER OFFICER

Where a statute, regulation or order confers function or duties on the proper officer of the Council in the following cases, he/she shall be the Parish Clerk or nominated officer.

3.1 Duties of the Proper Officer

(a) To sign and serve on councillors the summons to attend meetings of the Council, confirming the time, date, venue and agenda of a meeting of the Council at least 3 clear days before the meeting

(b) Give public notice of the time, date, venue and agenda at least 3 clear days before a meeting of the Council or a meeting of a committee or a sub-committee (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them).

(c) Convene a meeting of full Council for the election of a new Chairman of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in his office.

(d) To receive and retain declarations of acceptance of office.

(e) To receive and record notices disclosing interests at meetings

- (f) To receive and retain plans and documents.
- (g) To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the Council.
- (h) To receive and retain copies of bylaws made by another local authority.**
- (i) To certify copies of bylaws made by the Council.
- (j) To keep proper records for all Council meetings
- (k) To date every notice of resolution or recommendation when received, to number each notice in the order in which it was received and enter it in a book which shall be open to the inspection of every member of the Council.
- (l) Insert in the summons for every meeting all notices of motion or recommendation properly given in the order in which they have been received unless the member giving a notice of motion has stated in writing that he intends to move at some later meeting or that he withdraws it.

4 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

4.1 Chairman of the Meeting

- (a) The Chairman, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairman, if present, shall preside. If both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman are absent from a meeting, a Councillor as chosen by the Councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**
- (b) The Chairman of the Council, unless he has resigned or becomes disqualified, shall continue in office until his successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- (c) The Vice-Chairman of the Council, unless he resigns or becomes disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chairman of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**
- (d) The person presiding at a meeting may exercise all the powers and duties of the Chairman in relation to the conduct of the meeting.**

4.2 Order of Business

At every meeting the first business shall be to appoint a Chairman, if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be absent and to receive such declarations of acceptance of office (if any) and undertaking to observe the Council's code of conduct as are required by law to be made or, if not then received, to decide when they shall be received.

(a) the order of business, unless the Council otherwise decides on the ground of urgency, shall be as follows:-

- (i) To allow members of the public present to speak to the meeting on any topic notified at least 3 days prior to the meeting to the Parish

Clerk, with a maximum of 15 minutes allowed for any or all speakers.

- (ii) To read and consider the Minutes.
- (iii) After consideration to approve the signature of the Minutes by the person presiding as a correct record.
- (iv) To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.
- (v) To dispose of business, if any, remaining from the last meeting.
- (vi) To receive such communications as the person presiding may wish to lay before the Council.
- (vii) To answer questions from Councillors.
- (viii) To receive and consider reports and minutes of working parties.
- (ix) To receive and consider resolutions or recommendations in the order
- (x) in which they have been notified.
- (xi) To authorise the sealing of documents.
- (xii) To authorise the signing of cheques for payment.
- (xiii) Any other business specified in the summons.

(b) Urgent Business

A motion to vary the order of business on the ground of urgency:

- (i) may be proposed by the Chairman or by any member and, if proposed by the Chairman, may be put to the vote without being seconded, and
- (ii) shall be put to the vote without discussion.

(c) In every year, not later than the meeting at which the estimates for next year are settled, the Council shall review the pay and conditions of service of the clerk. *(Standing Order 6.3 must be read in conjunction with this requirement).*

5 EXTRA ORDINARY MEETINGS

(a) The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.

(b) If the Chairman of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within 7 days of having been requested to do so by two councillors, those two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.

6 RESOLUTIONS

6.1 General rules on resolutions (*see also Standing Order 3.1 (k) and (l)*)

(a) In accordance with standing order 3.1 (a), no motion may be moved at a meeting unless it is included in the agenda and the mover has given written notice of its wording to the Council's Proper Officer at least (5) clear days before the next meeting.

(b) A member may, with the consent of his seconder, move amendments to his own resolution.

(c) The mover of a resolution shall have a right to reply immediately before the resolution is put to the vote. If an amendment is proposed the mover of the amendment shall be entitled to reply immediately before the amendment is put to the vote. A member exercising a right of reply shall not introduce a new matter. After the right of reply has been exercised or waived, a vote shall be taken without further discussion.

(d) If a resolution or recommendation specified in the summons (*see Standing Order 3.1 (a)*) to attend the meeting is not moved either by the member who gave notice of it or by any other member, it shall, unless postponed by the Council, be treated as withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.

(e) If the subject matter of a resolution comes within the province of a committee of the Council, it shall, upon being moved and seconded, stand referred without discussion to such committee or to such other committee as the Council may determine for report: provided that the Chairman, if he considers it to be a matter of urgency, may allow it to be dealt with at the meeting at which it was moved.

(f) Every resolution or recommendation shall be relevant to some subject over which the Council has power or which affects its area.

6.2 Rescission of Previous Resolution

(a) A decision (whether affirmative or negative) of the Council shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special resolution, the written notice whereof bears the names of at least 3 members of the Council, or by a resolution moved in pursuance of the report or recommendation of a Parish Council.

(b) When a special resolution or any other resolution moved under the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Order has been disposed of, no similar resolution may be moved within a further six months.

6.3 Discussions and Resolutions Affecting Employees of the Council

If at a meeting there arises any question relating to the appointment, conduct, promotion, dismissal, salary or conditions of service, of any person employed by the Council, it shall not be considered until the Council or committee (as the case may be) has decided whether or not the public shall be excluded. (*See Standing Order No. 21.1.*)

7 RESOLUTIONS MOVES WITHOUT NOTICE

Resolutions dealing with the following matters may be moved without notice:-

- (a) To appoint a Chairman of the meeting.
- (b) To correct the Minutes.
- (c) To approve the Minutes.
- (d) To alter the order of business.
- (e) To proceed to the next business.
- (f) To close or adjourn the debate.
- (g) To refer a matter to another Council meeting.
- (h) To appoint a working party.
- (i) To adopt a report.
- (j) To authorise the sealing of documents.
- (k) To amend a motion.
- (l) To give leave to withdraw a resolution or an amendment.

- (m) To extend the time limit for speeches.
- (n) To exclude the press and public. (See Standing Order 21.1)
- (o) To silence or eject from the meeting a member named for misconduct.
(See Standing Order 13)
- (p) To give the consent of the Council where such consent is required by these Standing Orders.
- (q) **To suspend any Standing Order except those which are mandatory by law (See Standing Order 26)**
- (r) To adjourn the meeting.

8 QUORUM OF THE COUNCIL

(a) No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than 3.

(b) If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be adjourned. Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be transacted at a following meeting.

9 VOTING

(a) Subject to standing orders below, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors present and voting thereon.

(b) The Chairman may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.

(c) Voting on any question shall be by a show of hands, or if at least two members so request by signed ballot.

(d) At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded by the Clerk, so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next business.

(e) A Councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's Code of Conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.

10 QUESTIONS

(a) A member may ask the Chairman or the Clerk any question concerning the business of the Council, provided three clear days notice of the question has been given to the person to whom it is addressed.

(b) No questions not connected with business under discussion shall be asked.

(c) Every question shall be put and answered without discussion.

(d) A person to whom a question has been put may decline to answer.

11 RULES OF DEBATE

No discussion of the minutes shall take place except upon their accuracy. Corrections to the minutes shall be made by resolution and must be initialled by the Chairman.

11.1 (a) A resolution or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded and, unless proper notice has already been given, it shall, if required by the Chairman, be reduced to writing and handed to him before it is further discussed or put to the meeting.

(b) A member when seconding a resolution or amendment may, if he/she then declares his/her intention to do so, reserve his/her speech until a later period of the debate.

(c) A member shall direct his speech to the question under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a question of order.

(d) No speech by a mover of a resolution shall exceed 5 minutes and no other speech shall exceed 2 minutes except by consent of the Council.

(e) An amendment shall be either:

- (i) To leave out words
- (ii) To leave out words and insert others
- (iii) To insert or add words

(f) An amendment shall not have the effect of negating the resolution before the Council.

(g) If an amendment be carried, the resolution, as amended, shall take the place of the original resolution and shall become the resolution upon which any further amendment may be moved.

(h) A further amendment shall not be moved until the Council has disposed of every amendment previously moved.

(i) The mover of a resolution or of an amendment shall have a right of reply, not exceeding 2 minutes.

(j) A member, other than the mover of a resolution, shall not, without leave of the Council speak more than once on any resolution except to move an amendment or further amendment, or on an amendment, or on a point of order, or in personal explanation, or to move a closure.

(k) A member may speak on a point of order or a personal explanation. A member speaking for these purposes shall be heard forthwith. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by him which may have been misunderstood.

(l) A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the proposer with the consent of the Council, which shall be signified without discussion, and no member may speak upon it after permission has been asked for its withdrawal unless such permission has been refused.

(m) When a resolution is under debate no other resolution shall be moved except the following:-

- (i) To amend the resolution.
- (ii) To proceed to the next business.
- (iii) To adjourn the debate.
- (iv) That the question be now put.
- (v) That a member named be not further heard.
- (vi) That a member named leave the meeting.
- (vii) That the resolution be referred to a committee.
- (viii) To exclude the public and press.
- (ix) To adjourn the meeting.

11.2 A member shall remain seated when speaking unless requested to stand by the Chairman.

11.3 (a) The ruling of the Chairman on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be discussed.

(b) Members shall address the Chairman, if two or more members wish to speak, the Chairman shall call upon one of them to speak.

(c) Whenever the Chairman speaks during a debate all other members shall be silent.

12 CLOSURE

At the end of any speech a member may, without comment, move “that the question be now put”, “that the debate be now adjourned” or “that the Council do now adjourn”. If such motion is seconded the Chairman shall put the motion but, in the case of a motion “that the question be now put”, only if he is of the opinion that the question before the Council has been sufficiently debated. If the motion “that the question be now put” is carried, he shall call upon the mover to exercise or waive his right of reply and shall put the question immediately after that right

has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the Council shall not prejudice the mover's right of reply at the resumption.

13 CODE OF CONDUCT

(a) All members must observe the Code of Conduct published in November 2012 under LTN 80

(b) No member shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman, wilfully obstruct business, or behave irregularly, offensively, improperly or in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.

(c) If, in the opinion of the Chairman, a member has broken the provisions of paragraph (b) of this Order, the Chairman shall express that opinion to the Council and thereafter any member may move that the member named be no longer heard or that the member named do leave the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forthwith and without discussion. If a member reasonably believes another member is in breach of the code of conduct, that member is under a duty to report the breach to the Standards Board (England).

(c) If either of the motions mentioned in paragraph (c) is disobeyed, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting or take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce them.

(d) Upon notification by the District or Unitary Council that a Councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's Code of Conduct, the Council shall consider what, if any, action to take against him. Such action excludes disqualification or suspension from office.

14 VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

Where more than two persons have been nominated for any position to be filled by the Council and of the votes given there is not an absolute majority in favour of one person, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken, and so on until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.

15 SEALING OF DOCUMENTS

(a) A document shall not be sealed on behalf of the Council unless its sealing has been authorised by a resolution.

(b) Any two members of the Council named in a resolution moved under the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Order may seal, on behalf of the Council, any document required by law to be issued under seal.

16 WORKING PARTY MEETINGS

(a) The Council may create working groups, whose name and number of members and the bodies to be invited to nominate members shall be specified.

(b) A working group may make recommendations to the Council.

17 ACCOUNTS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND ESTIMATES

See Financial Regulations Adopted Parish Council Meeting 16 September 2010

18 INTERESTS

- 18.1 (a) Pursuant to s. 31(4) of the Localism Act 2011 (Code of Conduct) if a member or co-opted member of a parish council is aware that he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, he/she is barred from participating in any discussion or voting on the matter at the meeting. Participation in the discussion or voting on that matter is a criminal offence
- (b) If a member or co-opted member is aware of a "disclosable pecuniary interest" in a matter under consideration at a meeting but such interest is not already on the authority's register of interests or in the process of entry onto the register having been notified to the Monitoring Officer, the member or co-opted member must disclose the disclosable pecuniary interest to the meeting and register it within 28 days of the meeting at which relevant business is considered. If a member or co-opted member has a sensitive interest they must confirm at the meeting that they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, rather than giving details of that interest.
- (c) The Clerk will be required to compile and hold a register of member's interests in accordance with the agreement reached with the Monitoring Officer of the Responsible Authority and/or as required by statute.
- (d) Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the Proper Officer as soon as possible before the meeting, or failing that, at the start of the meeting for which the dispensation is required.
- (e) A decision as to whether to grant a dispensation shall be made by the Proper Officer and that decision is final.
- (f) A dispensation may be granted in accordance with standing order 18.1(e) above if having regard to all relevant circumstances with following applies:
- (i) Without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in the particular business would be so great a proportion of the meeting transacting the business as to impede the transaction or the business OR
 - (ii) Granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the Council's area OR
 - (iii) It is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.
- 18.2 If a candidate for any appointment under the Council is to his knowledge related to any member of or the holder of any office under the Council, he and the person to whom he is related shall disclose the relationship in writing to the Clerk. A candidate who fails so to do shall be disqualified for such appointment, and, if appointed, may be dismissed without notice. The Clerk shall report to the Council or to the appropriate committee any such disclosure. Where relationship to a member is disclosed Standing Orders 18 (a), (b) and (c) shall apply.
- 18.3 The Clerk shall make known the purpose of Standing Order 18 (a) to every candidate.

19 CANVASSING AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY MEMBERS

(a) Canvassing of members of the Council shall disqualify the candidate for such appointment. The Clerk shall make known the purport of this sub-paragraph of this Standing Order to every candidate.

(b) A member of the Council shall not solicit for any person any appointment under the Council or recommend any person for such appointment or for promotion; but, nevertheless, any such member may give a written testimonial of a candidate's ability, experience or character for submission to the Council with an application for appointment.

(c) Standing Orders Nos. 18.1 (b) and (c) shall apply to tenders as if the person making the tender were a candidate for an appointment.

20 INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS

(a) A member may for the purpose of his duty as such (but not otherwise), inspect any document in possession of the Council, shall on request, be supplied for the like purpose with a copy.

(b) All Minutes kept by the Council and by any committee shall be open for the inspection of any member of the Council.

(c) Unauthorised Activities

No member of the Council shall in the name of or on behalf of the Council:

- (i) Inspect any lands or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or
- (ii) Issue orders, instructions or directions, unless authorised to do so by the Council

21 PUBLIC AND PRESS

21.1 The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council and its Committees, which may, however, temporarily exclude the public by means of the following resolution:

“That in view of the [special] [confidential] nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.”

The Council shall state the reason for the exclusion

21.2 The Council shall afford to the press reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of any proceedings at which they are entitled to be present.

21.3 A person may not orally report or comment about a meeting as it takes place if they are present at the meeting of a parish council but otherwise may:

- a) film, photograph or make an audio recording of a meeting;**
- b) use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later;**
- c) report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting.**

21.4 If a member of the public interrupts the proceeding at any meeting, the Chairman may, after warning, order that he be removed from the meeting and may adjourn the meeting for such period as is necessary to restore order.

22 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

(a) No member of the Council shall disclose to any person not a member of the Council any business declared to be confidential by the Council, the committee or the sub-committee as the case may be.

(b) Any member in breach of the provisions of paragraph (a) of this Standing Order shall be removed from the Council.

23 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Clerk shall, as soon as it is received, circulate to Members of the Council, request an extension of time to the District Council if appropriate and place on next Agenda.

24 FINANCIAL MATTERS

See Financial Regulations Adopted Parish Council Meeting 16 September 2010.

25 COMPLAINTS

The Council shall deal with complaints of maladministration allegedly committed by the Council or by any officer or member in the manner as adopted by the Council (attached as Appendix1) except for those complaints which should be properly directed to the Standards Board (England) for consideration.

26 REVIEW, VARIATION, REVOCATION, AND SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Any or every part of the Standing Orders except those printed in **bold type** may be suspended by resolution in relation to any specific item of business.

26.1 A resolution permanently to add, vary or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

26.2 Standing Orders to be reviewed at least once during the term of office of a Parish Council

26.3 Standing Orders to be Given to Members

A copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each member by the Clerk upon delivery to him of the member's declaration of acceptance of office and written undertaking to observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council.

27 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

See Appendix II for Process of Processing any requests.

APPENDIX 1

STOW MARIES
CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

This Code of Practice is designed for those complaints that cannot be satisfied by less formal measures provided to the complainant by the Clerk, other proper officer or the Chairman.

The Code is aimed at those situations where a complaint has been made about the administration of the council or about its procedures. It is not an appropriate procedure for a complaint against individuals, these should be dealt with by the Standards Board or local Monitoring Officer.

CODE OF PRACTICE

- 1 The complainant should be asked to put the complaint about the council's procedures or administration in writing to the clerk or other nominated proper officer.
- 2 If the complainant does not wish to put the complaint to the clerk or other proper officer, they may be advised to put it to the chairman of the council.
- 3 The clerk shall acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and advise the complainant when the matter will be considered by the council or by the committee established for the purposes of hearing complaints.
- 4 The complainant shall be invited to attend the relevant meeting and bring with them such representatives as they wish.
- 5 Seven clear working days prior to the meeting, the complainant shall provide the Council with copies of any documentation or other evidence, which they wish to refer to at the meeting. The Council shall similarly provide the complainant with copies of any documentation upon which they wish to rely at the meeting.

At the Meeting

- 6 The Council shall consider whether the circumstances of the meeting warrant the exclusion of the public and press. Any decision on a complaint shall be announced at the Council meeting in public.
- 7 Chairman to introduce everyone.
- 8 Chairman to explain procedure.
- 9 Complainant (or representative) to outline grounds for complaint.
- 10 Members to ask any question of the complainant.
- 11 If relevant, clerk or other proper officer to explain councils position.
- 12 Members to ask any question of the clerk or other proper officer
- 13 Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be offered opportunity of last word (in this order).
- 14 Clerk or other proper officer and complainant to be asked to leave room while members decide whether or not the grounds for the complaint have been made. If a point of clarification is necessary, both parties to be invited back.
- 15 Clerk or other proper officer and complainant return to hear decision, or to be advised when a decision will be made.

After the Meeting

- 16 Decision confirmed in writing within seven working days together with details of any action to be taken.

STOW MARIES PARISH COUNCIL

Freedom of Information Act – Publication Scheme

Contact Details:

Clerk to Stow Maries Parish Council

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We are always willing to give advice on matters relating to any of our services. Officers will be friendly, helpful, and professional and treat customers with respect.

We want to make it as easy as possible for you to contact us and details are at the top of this page. All requests for information must be made in writing to the Clerk at the address given above.

This publication scheme has been prepared and approved by the Information Commissioner. This publication scheme commits Stow Maries Parish Council to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where this information is held by the Parish Council.

This scheme commits Stow Maries Parish Council:

- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the Parish Council and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information which is held by the Parish Council and falls within the classifications below.
- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- To produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
- To review and update on a regular basis the information the Parish Council makes available under this scheme.
- To produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- To make this publication scheme readily available to the public.

Classes of information	Format
Who we are and what we do Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council structure • Councillor's details • Staffing structure • Location • Contact details 	W/E/P W/E/P W/E/P W/E/P W/E/P
What we spend and how we spend it Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Return form • Auditor's Reports • Budget & precept demand • Councillors' allowances and expenses • Grants made • Current contracts • Financial Regulations 	P P P N/A N/A P W/E/P
What our priorities are and how we are doing Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Reports • Parish Plan • Quality status • Local charters 	N/A N/A N/A N/A
How we make decisions Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timetable of meetings • Agendas and minutes of all council meetings open to the public (Excluding information that is properly regarded as private to the meeting) • Reports presented to the Council when open to the public • Responses to consultation papers • Responses to planning applications • Record of the Parish Meeting 	W/E/P W/E/P W/E/P E/P E/P W/E/P
Our policies and procedures Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing Orders • Code of Conduct • Risk Assessment/Health and Safety • Equal Opportunities • Records Management • Policies and procedures for handling requests for information/ charges • Complaints procedures 	W/E/P E/P E/P N/A I W/E/P W/E/P
Lists and registers Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the Parish Council	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assets Register • Register of Councillor's Interests • Register of gifts and hospitality 	E/P I I
The services we offer Information about the services we offer, advice and guidance, leaflets and newsletters. Details of the services offered	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street Furniture (seats, litter/dog bins, notice boards, village signs etc) 	E/P

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Key to format abbreviations:

E – Email, P – Paper, I – Inspection, N/A – Not applicable at this time.

The classes of information will not generally include:

- Information the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.
- Information in draft form.
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons.

Methods by which information published under this scheme will be made available:

- Hard copies can be requested, or an appointment made to view the requested information at a mutually convenient time and location within a reasonable timescale.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where the Parish Council is legally required to translate any information, it will do so.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

Charges which may be made for information published under this scheme

The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by the Parish Council for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament.

Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- photocopying @ 10p per copy
- postage and packaging
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Information supplied as email will normally be free of charge, unless considered excessive, when a charge of 10p per page will be levied.

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

Written requests

Information held by the Council that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Request for Information

Name:

Address:

Tel No:

Fax No:

E-Mail:

Details of information requested:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Adopted: 16 October 2008 (Minutes 79)

Revised: