SEALAND COMMUNITY COUNCIL

STANDING ORDERS

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MODEL STANDING ORDERS 2026 (WALES)

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INTRODUCTION

How to use model standing orders

Standing orders are the written rules of a local council. Standing orders are essential to regulate the proceedings of a meeting. A council may also use standing orders to confirm or refer to various internal organisational and administrative arrangements. The standing orders of a council are not the same as the policies of a council but standing orders may refer to them.

Local councils operate within a wide statutory framework. These model standing orders incorporate and reference many statutory requirements to which councils are subject. It is not possible for the model standing orders to contain or reference all the statutory or legal requirements which apply to local councils. For example, it is not practical for model standing orders to document all obligations under data protection legislation. The statutory requirements to which a council is subject apply whether or not they are incorporated in a council's standing orders.

The model standing orders do not include model financial regulations. Financial regulations are standing orders to regulate and control the financial affairs and accounting procedures of a local council. The financial regulations, as opposed to the standing orders of a council, include most of the requirements relevant to the council's Responsible Financial Officer. Model financial regulations are available to councils in membership of One Voice Wales (OVW).

Drafting notes

Model standing orders that are in bold type contain legal and statutory requirements. It is recommended that councils adopt them without changing them or their meaning. Model standing orders not in bold are designed to help councils operate effectively but they do not contain statutory requirements so they may be adopted as drafted or amended to suit a council's needs. It is OVW's view that all model standing orders will generally be suitable for councils.

For convenience, the word "councillor" is used in model standing orders and, unless the context suggests otherwise, includes a non-councillor with or without voting rights. A model standing order that includes brackets like this '( )' requires information to be inserted by a council. A model standing order that includes brackets like this '[ ]' and the term 'OR' provides alternative options for a council to choose from when determining standing orders.

RULES OF DEBATE AT MEETINGS

a Motions on the agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear unless the order is changed at the discretion of the chair of the meeting.

b A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded.

c A motion on the agenda that is not moved by its proposer may be treated by the chair of the meeting as withdrawn.

d 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.

e An amendment is a proposal to remove or add words to a motion. It shall not negate the motion.

f If an amendment to the original motion is carried, the original motion (as amended) becomes the substantive motion upon which further amendment(s) may be moved.

g An amendment shall not be considered unless early verbal notice of it is given at the meeting and, if requested by the chair of the meeting, is expressed in writing to the chair.

h A councillor may move an amendment to their own motion if agreed by the meeting. If a motion has already been seconded, the amendment shall be with the consent of the seconder and the meeting.

i If there is more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion, the amendments shall be moved in the order directed by the chair of the meeting.

j Subject to standing order 1(k), only one amendment shall be moved and debated at a time, the order of which shall be directed by the chair of the meeting.

k One or more amendments may be discussed together if the chair of the meeting considers this expedient but each amendment shall be voted upon separately.

l A councillor may not move more than one amendment to an original or substantive motion.

m The mover of an amendment has no right of reply at the end of debate on it.

n Where a series of amendments to an original motion are carried, the

mover of the original motion shall have a right of reply either at the end of debate on the first amendment or at the very end of debate on the final substantive motion immediately before it is put to the vote.

o Unless permitted by the chair 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 they last spoke;

iii. to make a point of order;

iv. to give a personal explanation; or

v. to exercise a right of reply.

p 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 they consider has been breached or specify the other irregularity in the proceedings of the meeting they are concerned by.

q A point of order shall be decided by the chair of the meeting and their decision shall be final.

r When a motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:

i. to amend the motion;

ii. to proceed to the next business;

iii. to adjourn the debate;

iv. to put the motion to a vote;

v. to ask a person to be no longer heard or to leave the meeting;

vi. to refer a motion to a committee or sub-committee for consideration;

vii. to exclude the public and press;

viii. to adjourn the meeting; or

ix. to suspend particular standing order(s) excepting those which reflect mandatory statutory or legal requirements.

s Before an original or substantive motion is put to the vote, the chair 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 their right of reply.

t Excluding motions moved under standing order 1(r), the contributions or speeches by a councillor shall relate only to the motion under discussion and shall not exceed **5** minutes without the consent of the chair of the meeting.

DISORDERLY CONDUCT AT MEETINGS

a No person shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly. If this standing order is ignored, the chair of the meeting shall request such person(s) to moderate or improve their conduct.

b If person(s) disregard the request of the chair of the meeting to moderate or improve their conduct, any councillor or the chair of the meeting may move that the person be no longer heard or be excluded from the meeting. The motion, if seconded, shall be put to the vote without discussion.

c If a resolution made under standing order 2(b) is ignored, the chair of the meeting may take further reasonable steps to restore order or to progress the meeting. This may include temporarily suspending or closing the meeting.

MEETINGS GENERALLY

Full Council meetings ●
Committee meetings ●
Sub-committee meetings ●

a Notices of meetings

i. The notice (including how the meeting may be accessed virtually, if applicable) must be published electronically and in a conspicuous place in the community at least three clear days before the meeting, or if the meeting is convened at shorter notice, at the time it is convened.

ii. If a member wants to receive the summons in writing rather than electronically to the address allocated to them or notified as their address to the clerk , they must give notice in writing

to the clerk and specify the postal address to which the summons should be sent.

iii. The notice must provide details about how to access the meeting remotely , and the time and place of the meeting. The place may be omitted if the meeting is held by remote means only.

iv. In exceptional circumstances, a meeting of a committee or sub-committee of the council may be called at shorter notice. In which case, notices should be published with at least 24 hours' notice.

These notice requirements also apply where a formal meeting is taking place which is not open to the public.

b Multi-location meetings

i. All community councils must make and publish arrangements for its meetings to enable people who are not in the same place to meet. Under the arrangements, councils will need to take reasonable steps to allow meetings to be held from multiple locations. If the arrangements are revised or replaced the new arrangements must also be published.

ii. The minimum requirement is that members are able to hear and be heard by others.

Meetings Generally – Other.

- a **The minimum three clear days for notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the 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.**
- b **The minimum three clear days' public notice for a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice** OR [The minimum three clear days' public notice of a meeting does not include the day on which the notice was issued or the day of the meeting].
- 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 and the press's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public and the press to be excluded.

d The person presiding over the meeting must give members of the public in attendance a reasonable opportunity to make representations about any business to be discussed at the meeting, unless doing so is likely to prejudice the effective conduct of the meeting. This does not mean that members of the public can take part in debate, but they must be given a reasonable opportunity to make representations about business to be discussed.

e The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting in accordance with standing order 3(d) shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed otherwise by the chair of the meeting.

f Subject to standing order 3(e), a member of the public shall not speak for more than 5 minutes.

g In accordance with standing order 3(d), a question shall not require a response at the meeting nor start a debate on the question. The chair of the meeting may direct that a written or oral response be given.

h [A person shall stand when requesting to speak other than in the case of a person attending from another location and when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)] OR [A person shall raise their hand when requesting to speak and stand when speaking (except when a person has a disability or is likely to suffer discomfort)]. The chair of the meeting may at any time permit a person to be seated when speaking.

i A person who speaks at a meeting shall direct their comments to the chair of the meeting.

j Only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wants to speak, the chair of the meeting shall direct the order of speaking.

k **Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is not permitted without the Council's consent**.

l **The press shall be provided with reasonable facilities for the taking of their report of all or part of a meeting at which they are entitled to be present.**

- m **Subject to standing orders which indicate otherwise, anything authorised or required to be done by, to or before the Chair of the Council may in their absence be done by, to or before the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one).**

- n **The Chair of the Council, if present, shall preside at a meeting. If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chair of the Council (if there is one), if present, shall preside. If both the Chair and the Vice-Chair are absent from a meeting, a councillor as chosen by the councillors present at the meeting shall preside at the meeting.**

- o **Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the councillors and non-councillors with voting rights present and voting.**

- p **The chair of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise their casting vote whether or not they gave an original vote.**

  See standing orders 5(h) and (i) for the different rules that apply in the election of the Chair of the Council at the annual meeting of the Council.

- q **Unless standing orders provide otherwise, voting on a question shall be by a show of hands. At the request of a councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show whether each councillor present and voting gave their vote for or against that question.** Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

  r 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;

  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; and

vii. the resolutions made.

s **A councillor or a non-councillor with voting rights who has a personal or prejudicial interest in a matter being considered at a meeting which limits or restricts their right to participate in a discussion or vote on that matter is subject to obligations in the code of conduct adopted by the Council**.

t **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 three.**

See standing order 4(d)(viii) for the quorum of a committee or sub-committee meeting.

u **If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted** and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.

v A meeting shall not exceed a period of 2.5 hours.

COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

a **Unless the Council determines otherwise, a committee may appoint a sub-committee whose terms of reference and members shall be determined by the committee.**

b **The members of a committee may include non-councillors unless it is a committee which regulates and controls the finances of the Council.**

c **Unless the Council determines otherwise, all the members of an advisory committee and a sub-committee of the advisory committee may be non-councillors.**

d The Council may appoint standing committees or other committees as may be necessary, and:

i. shall determine their terms of reference;

ii. shall determine the number and time of the ordinary meetings of a standing committee up until the date of the next annual meeting of the Council;

iii. shall permit a committee, other than in respect of the ordinary meetings of a committee, to determine the number and time of its meetings;

iv. shall, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of members of such a committee;

v. may, subject to standing orders 4(b) and (c), appoint and determine the terms of office of the substitute members to a committee whose role is to replace the ordinary members at a meeting of a committee if the ordinary members of the committee confirm to the Proper Officer **5** days before the meeting that they are unable to attend;

vi. shall, after it has appointed the members of a standing committee, appoint the chair of the standing committee;

vii. shall permit a committee other than a standing committee, to appoint its own chair at the first meeting of the committee;

viii. shall determine the place, notice requirements and quorum for a meeting of a committee and a sub-committee which, in both cases, shall be no less than three;

ix. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a committee;

x. shall determine if the public and press are permitted to attend the meetings of a sub-committee and also the advance public notice requirements, if any, required for the meetings of a sub-committee;

xi. shall determine if the public may participate at a meeting of a sub-committee that they are permitted to attend; and

xii. may dissolve a committee or a sub-committee.

ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

a **In an election year, the annual meeting of the Council 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 meeting of the Council shall be held on such day in May as the Council decides.**

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

d **In addition to the annual meeting of the Council, any number of other ordinary meetings may be held in each year on such dates and times as the Council decides.**

e **The first business conducted at the annual meeting of the Council shall be the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council.**

f **The Chair of the Council, unless they have resigned or become disqualified, shall continue in office and preside at the annual meeting until their successor is elected at the next annual meeting of the Council.**

g **The Vice-Chair of the Council if there is one, unless they resign or become disqualified, shall hold office until immediately after the election of the Chair of the Council at the next annual meeting of the Council.**

h **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has not been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a successor Chair of the Council has been elected. The current Chair of the Council shall not have an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council but shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

i **In an election year, if the current Chair of the Council has been re-elected as a member of the Council, they shall preside at the annual meeting until a new Chair of the Council has been elected. They may exercise an original vote in respect of the election of the new Chair of the Council and shall give a casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.**

j Following the election of the Chair of the Council and Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council at the annual meeting, the business shall include:

i. **In an election year, delivery by the Chair of the Council and councillors of their 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, delivery by the Chair of the Council of their acceptance of office form unless the Council resolves for this to be done at a later date;**

ii. Confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes of the last meeting of the Council;

iii. Receipt of the minutes of the last meeting of a committee;

iv. Consideration of the recommendations made by a committee;

v. Review of delegation arrangements to committees, sub-committees, staff and other local authorities;

vi. Review of the terms of reference for committees;

vii. Appointment of members to existing committees;

viii. Appointment of any new committees in accordance with standing order 4;

ix. Review and adoption of appropriate standing orders and financial regulations;

x. Review of the eligibility criteria for the use of the general power of competence

xi. Review and adoption of the council's annual report

xii. Review and adoption of the council's training plan

xiii. Review of arrangements (including legal agreements) with other local authorities, not-for-profit bodies and businesses;

xiv. Review of representation on or work with external bodies and arrangements for reporting back;

xv. Review of inventory of land and other assets including buildings and office equipment;

xvi. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks;

xvii. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies;

xviii. Review of the Council's complaints procedure;

xix. Review of the Council's policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation (*see also standing orders 11, 20 and 21*);

xx. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media;

xxi. Review of the Council's employment policies and procedures;

xxii. Review of the Council's expenditure incurred under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972

xxiii. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.

EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES

a **The Chair of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.**

b **If the Chair of the Council does not call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within seven days of having been requested in writing to do so by two councillors, any two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The public notice giving the time, place and agenda for such a meeting shall be signed by the two councillors.**

c The chair of a committee or a sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or the sub-committee at any time.

d If the chair of a committee or a sub-committee does not call an extraordinary meeting within **7** days of having been requested to do so by **6** members of the committee or the sub-committee, any **6** members of the committee or the sub-committee may convene an extraordinary meeting of the committee or the sub-committee.

PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS

a A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least 6 councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.

b When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months.

VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS

a Where more than two persons have been nominated for a position to be filled by the Council and none of those persons has received an absolute majority of votes in their favour, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote taken. This process shall continue until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person. A tie in votes may be settled by the casting vote exercisable by the chair of the meeting.

MOTIONS FOR A MEETING THAT REQUIRES 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 **7** 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 standing order 9(b), correct obvious grammatical or typographical errors in the wording of the motion.

d If the Proper Officer considers the wording of a motion received in accordance with standing order 9(b) is not clear in meaning, the motion shall be rejected until the mover of the motion re-submits it, so that it can be understood, in writing, to the Proper Officer at least 7 clear days before the meeting.

e If the wording or subject of a proposed motion is considered improper, the Proper Officer shall consult with the chair 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.

f The decision of the Proper Officer as to whether or not to include the motion on the agenda shall be final.

g Motions received shall be recorded and numbered in the order that they are received.

h Motions rejected shall be recorded with an explanation by the Proper Officer of the reason for rejection.

MOTIONS AT A MEETING THAT DO NOT REQUIRE WRITTEN NOTICE

a The following motions may be moved at a meeting without written notice to the Proper Officer:

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 refer a motion to a particular committee or sub-committee;

v. to appoint a person to preside at a meeting;

vi. to change the order of business on the agenda;

vii. to proceed to the next business on the agenda;

viii. to require a written report;

ix. to appoint a committee or sub-committee and their members;

x. to extend the time limits for speaking;

xi. to exclude the press and public from a meeting in respect of confidential or other information which is prejudicial to the public interest;

xii. to not hear further from a councillor or a member of the public;

xiii. to exclude a councillor or member of the public for disorderly conduct;

xiv. to temporarily suspend the meeting;

xv. to suspend a particular standing order (unless it reflects mandatory statutory or legal requirements);

xvi. to adjourn the meeting; or

xvii. to close the meeting.

MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

See also standing order 20.

a **The Council shall have in place and keep under review, technical and organisational measures to keep secure information (including personal data) which it holds in paper and electronic form. Such arrangements shall include deciding who has access to personal data and encryption of personal data. Such data will include recordings of meetings held by the Council.**

b **The Council shall have in place, and keep under review, policies for the retention and safe destruction of all information (including personal data) which it holds in paper, recorded and electronic form. The Council's retention policy shall confirm the period for which information (including personal data) shall be retained or if this is not possible the criteria used to determine that period (e.g., the Limitation Act 1980).**

c **The agenda, papers that support the agenda and the minutes of a meeting shall not disclose or otherwise undermine confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

d **Councillors, staff, the Council's contractors and agents shall not disclose confidential information or personal data without legal justification.**

DRAFT MINUTES

a If the draft minutes of a preceding meeting have been served on councillors with the agenda to attend the meeting at which they are due to be approved for accuracy, they shall be taken as read.

b There shall be no discussion about the draft minutes of a preceding meeting except in relation to their accuracy. A motion to correct an inaccuracy in the draft minutes shall be moved in accordance with standing order **10**(a)(i).

c The accuracy of draft minutes, including any amendment(s) made to them, shall be confirmed by resolution and shall be signed by the chair of the meeting and stand as an accurate record of the meeting to which the minutes relate.

d If the chair of the meeting does not consider the minutes to be an accurate record of the meeting to which they relate, they shall sign the minutes and include a paragraph in the following terms or to the same effect:

"The chair of this meeting does not believe that the minutes of the meeting of the ( ) held on [date] in respect of ( ) were a correct record but their view was not upheld by the meeting and the minutes are confirmed as an accurate record of the proceedings."

e Subject to standing order **20**(a) and following a resolution which confirms the accuracy of the minutes of a meeting, the draft minutes or recordings of the meeting for which approved minutes exist shall be destroyed.

f) **no later than seven working days following a council meeting, the council must publish electronically a note setting out:**

- **The names of the members who attended the meeting, and any apologies for absence;**
- **Any declarations of interest; and**
- **Any decisions taken at the meeting, including the outcomes of any votes.**

The requirements regarding the note to be published after a council meeting do not apply for private business or where disclosure would be detrimental to acting on those decisions.

CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISPENSATIONS

See also standing order 3(s).

a **Councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.**

b All councillors and non-councillors with voting rights shall undertake training in the code of conduct within six months of the delivery of their acceptance of office form.

c **Dispensation requests shall be in writing and submitted to the standards committee of Flintshire County Council** as soon as possible before the meeting that the dispensation is required for.

CODE OF CONDUCT COMPLAINTS

a Upon notification by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales that it is dealing with a complaint that a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has breached the Council's code of conduct, the Proper Officer shall, subject to standing order **13**, report this to the Council.

b Where the notification in standing order **14**(a) relates to a complaint made by the Proper Officer, the Proper Officer shall notify the Chair of Council of this fact, and the Chair shall nominate another staff member to assume the duties of the Proper Officer in relation to the complaint until it has been determined.

c The Council may:

i. provide information or evidence where such disclosure is

necessary to investigate the complaint or is a legal requirement;

ii. seek information relevant to the complaint from the person or body with statutory responsibility for investigation of the matter;

iii. indemnify the councillor or non-councillor with voting rights in respect of their related legal costs and any such indemnity is subject to approval by a meeting of the Council.

PROPER OFFICER

a The Proper Officer shall be either (i) the clerk or (ii) other staff member(s) nominated by the Council to undertake the work of the Proper Officer when the Proper Officer is absent.

i. The Proper Officer shall **at least three clear days before a meeting of the council, a committee** or a sub-committee:

a) Arrange for the serving of the notice (including how the meeting may be accessed virtually, (if applicable) which must be published electronically and in a conspicuous place in the community at least three clear days before the meeting, or if the meeting is convened at shorter notice, at the time it is convened.
b) If a member wants to receive the summons in writing rather than electronically, they must give notice in writing to the clerk and specify the postal address to which the summons should be sent.
c) The notice must provide details about how to access the meeting remotely , and the time and place of the meeting. The place may be omitted if the meeting is held by remote means only.

d) The notice must be available in a conspicuous place giving notice of the time, place and agenda (provided that the public notice with agenda of an extraordinary meeting of the Council convened by councillors is signed by them) and published electronically with notice of the time and place and, as far as reasonably practicable, any documents relating to the business to be transacted at the meeting unless they relate to business which is likely to be considered in private or if their disclosure would be contrary to any enactment.

*See standing order **3 (a) and (b) (Meetings Generally – Other)** for the meaning of clear days for a meeting of a full council and for a meeting of a committee;*

ii. subject to standing order 9, include on the agenda all motions in the order received unless a councillor has given written notice at

least **7** days before the meeting confirming their withdrawal of it;

iii. **convene a meeting of Council for the election of a new Chair of the Council, occasioned by a casual vacancy in their office;**

iv. **facilitate inspection of the minute book by local government electors;**

v. **receive and retain copies of byelaws made by other local authorities;**

vi. hold acceptance of office forms from councillors;

vii. hold a copy of every councillor's register of interests where the Council has resolved to require councillors to declare interests upfront;

viii. assist with responding to requests made under freedom of information legislation and rights exercisable under data protection legislation, in accordance with the Council's relevant policies and procedures;

ix. liaise, as appropriate, with the Council's Data Protection Officer (if there is one);

x. receive and send general correspondence and notices on behalf of the Council except where there is a resolution to the contrary;

xi. assist in the organisation of, storage of, access to, security of and destruction of information held by the Council in paper and electronic form subject to the requirements of freedom of information and data protection legislation and other legitimate requirements (e.g., the Limitation Act 1980);

xii. arrange for legal deeds to be executed;

*See also standing order **23**;*

xiii. arrange or manage the prompt authorisation, approval, and instruction regarding any payments to be made by the Council in accordance with its financial regulations;

xiv. record every planning application notified to the Council and the Council's response to the local planning authority in a book or file for such purpose;

xv. refer a planning application received by the Council to the [Chair or in their absence the Vice-Chair (if there is one) of the Council within two working days of receipt to facilitate an extraordinary meeting if

the nature of a planning application requires consideration before the next ordinary meeting of the Council.

xvi. manage access to information about the Council via the publication scheme; and

xvii. retain custody of the seal of the Council (if there is one) which shall not be used without a resolution to that effect.
*See also standing order **23.***

RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

a The Council shall appoint appropriate staff member(s) to undertake the work of the Responsible Financial Officer when the Responsible Financial Officer is absent.

ACCOUNTS AND ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS

a "Proper practices" in standing orders refer to the most recent version of "Governance and Accountability for Local Councils in Wales – A Practitioners' Guide."

b All payments by the Council shall be authorised, approved and paid in accordance with the law, proper practices and the Council's financial regulations.

c The Responsible Financial Officer shall supply to each councillor as soon as practicable after 30 June, 30 September and 31 December in each year a statement to summarise:

i. the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for each quarter;

ii. the Council's aggregate receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the year to date;

iii. the balances held at the end of the quarter being reported and

which includes a comparison with the budget for the financial year and highlights any actual or potential overspends.

d As soon as possible after the financial year end at 31 March, the Responsible Financial Officer shall provide:

i. each councillor with a statement summarising the Council's receipts and payments (or income and expenditure) for the last

quarter and the year to date for information; and

ii. to the Council the accounting statements for the year in the form of Section 2 of the annual governance and accountability return, as required by proper practices, for consideration and approval.

e The year-end accounting statements shall be prepared in accordance with proper practices and apply the form of accounts determined by the Council (receipts and payments or income and expenditure) for the year to 31 March. A completed draft annual governance and accountability return shall be presented to all councillors at least 14 days prior to anticipated approval by the Council. The annual governance and accountability return of the Council, which is subject to external audit, including the annual governance statement, shall be presented to the Council for consideration and formal approval before 30 June.

FINANCIAL CONTROLS AND PROCUREMENT

a The Council shall consider and adopt financial regulations which shall include detailed arrangements in respect of the following:

i. the keeping of accounting records and systems of internal controls;

ii. the assessment and management of financial risks faced by the Council;

iii. the work of the independent internal auditor in accordance with proper practices and the receipt of regular reports from the internal auditor, which shall be required at least annually;

iv. the inspection and copying by councillors and local electors of the Council's accounts and/or orders of payment; and

b Financial regulations shall be reviewed regularly and at least annually for fitness of purpose.

c Subject to additional requirements in the financial regulations of the Council, the tender process for contracts for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall include, as a minimum, the following steps:

i. a specification for the goods, materials, services or the execution of works shall be drawn up;

ii. an invitation to tender shall be drawn up to confirm (i) the Council's specification (ii) the time, date and address for the submission of tenders (iii) the date of the Council's written response to the tender and (iv) the prohibition on prospective contractors contacting

councillors or staff to encourage or support their tender outside the prescribed process;

iii. the invitation to tender shall be advertised in a local newspaper and in any other manner that is appropriate;

iv. tenders are to be submitted in writing in a sealed marked envelope addressed to the Proper Officer;

v. tenders shall be opened by the Proper Officer in the presence of at least one councillor after the deadline for submission of tenders has passed;

vi. tenders are to be reported to and considered by the appropriate meeting of the Council or a committee or sub-committee with delegated responsibility.

d Neither the Council, nor a committee or a sub-committee with delegated responsibility for considering tenders, is bound to accept the lowest value tender.

Where the value of a contract is likely to exceed the threshold specified by the Welsh Government from time to time, the Council must consider whether the contract is subject to the requirements of the current procurement legislation and, if so, the Council must comply with procurement rules. Guidance from the Welsh Government on procurement contains detailed guidance and has been circulated to all member councils.

Please refer to Appendix 1 (Part 1 and Part 2) and financial regulations for procurement on contracts under and over £30.000.

HANDLING STAFF MATTERS

a A matter personal to a member of staff that is being considered by a meeting of Council is subject to standing order **11**.

b Subject to the Council's policy regarding absences from work, the Council's most senior member of staff shall notify the chair of Council, if they are not available, the vice-chair (if there is one) of absence occasioned by illness or other reason and that person shall report such absence to the Council at its next meeting.

c The chair of the Council or in their absence, the vice-chair shall upon a resolution conduct a review of the performance and annual appraisal of the work of [the member of staff's job title]. The reviews and appraisal

shall be reported in writing and are subject to approval by resolution by the Council.

d Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Council's most senior member of staff (or other members of staff) shall contact the chair of the Council or in their absence, the vice-chair of the Council in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.

e Subject to the Council's policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, if an informal or formal grievance matter raised by [the member of staff's job title] relates to the chair or vice-chair of the Council, this shall be communicated to another member of the Council, which shall be reported back and progressed by resolution of the Council.

f Any persons responsible for all or part of the management of staff shall treat as confidential the written records of all meetings relating to their performance, capabilities, grievance or disciplinary matters.

g In accordance with standing order **11**(a), persons with line management responsibilities shall have access to staff records referred to in standing order **19**(f).

RESPONSIBILITIES TO PROVIDE INFORMATION

See also standing order 21.

a **In accordance with freedom of information legislation, the Council shall publish information in accordance with its publication scheme and respond to requests for information held by the Council.**

RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER DATA PROTECTION LEGISLATION

(Below is not an exclusive list).

See also standing order **11**.

a The Council may appoint a Data Protection Officer.

b **The Council shall have policies and procedures in place to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data.**

c **The Council shall have a written policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach.**

d **The Council shall keep a record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken.**

e **The Council shall ensure that information communicated in its privacy notice(s) is in an easily accessible and available form and kept up to date.**

f **The Council shall maintain a written record of its processing activities.**

RELATIONS WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA

a Requests from the press or other media for an oral or written comment or statement from the Council, its councillors or staff shall be handled in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.

EXECUTION AND SEALING OF LEGAL DEEDS

See also standing orders ***15(a)(xii) and 15(a)(xvii)***

a A legal deed shall not be executed on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a resolution.

b **[Subject to standing order 23(a), the Council's common seal shall alone be used for sealing a deed required by law. It shall be applied by the Proper Officer in the presence of two councillors who shall**

sign the deed as witnesses.]

The above is applicable to a Council with a common seal.

COMMUNICATING WITH FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLORS

a An invitation to attend a meeting of the Council shall be sent, together with the agenda, to the ward councillor(s) of Flintshire County Council representing the area of the Council.

b Unless the Council determines otherwise, a copy of each letter sent to Flintshire County Council shall be sent to the ward councillor(s) representing the area of the Council.

RESTRICTIONS ON COUNCILLOR ACTIVITIES

a. Unless duly authorised no councillor shall:

i. inspect any land and/or premises which the Council has a right or duty to inspect; or

ii. issue orders, instructions or directions.

STANDING ORDERS GENERALLY

a All or part of a standing order, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, may be suspended by resolution in relation to the consideration of an item on the agenda for a meeting.

b A motion to add to or vary or revoke one or more of the Council's standing orders, except one that incorporates mandatory statutory or legal requirements, shall be proposed by a special motion, the written notice by at least **6** councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order **9**.

c The Proper Officer shall provide a copy of the Council's standing orders to a councillor as soon as possible.

d The decision of the chair of a meeting as to the application of standing orders at the meeting shall be final.

APPENDIX 1

This advice note was last updated on 3 February 2026 and was issued by our finance advisor, Parkinson Partnership LLP.

Introduction
This advice note applies to both England and Wales, but there are separate Procurement Regulations for Wales, and references are given to both versions where applicable.

This advice note is intended to give an overview of the rules brought in by the Procurement Act 2023 (the 2023 Act). It is not designed as a substitute for reading the detailed government guidance when a council carries out a large procurement, or where the circumstances of the procurement are unusual.

"Procurement" refers to the process by which councils award and manage contracts to acquire goods, works and services from third parties. It covers the purchase of everything from stationery to the construction of a new building complex. The 2023 Act is not intended to capture purely compensatory or supportive arrangements, such as grants.

One aspect that has been strengthened from the previous Regulations is ensuring that smaller entities can participate in competition for contracts. Councils must have regard to the fact that small and medium-sized enterprises may face barriers to participation and consider whether barriers can be removed or reduced. This requirement is set out in Sections 12 and 86 of the 2023 Act.

The Act also implies 30-day payment terms for undisputed invoices in all contracts over £30,000 (including VAT), and this overrides any longer timescales written into those contracts (see Sections 66 and 88 of the 2023 Act).

Part One — Above threshold procurement
Procurement thresholds
Parliament sets thresholds to ensure fair competition in public procurement every two years. Where the value of a contract is expected to exceed the relevant threshold currently in force, the full requirements of the 2023 Act and the Procurement Regulations 2024 must be followed when carrying out the procurement. A council can be challenged in court if it fails to comply with the rules.

In most situations, a council is legally obliged to use a competitive tendering process to award a contract above the relevant threshold.

The thresholds below apply to councils from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2027:

£207,720 including VAT when procuring goods or services, or
£5,193,000 including VAT for public works (construction).
"Works" are defined in Schedule 3 of the Procurement Regulations 2024 and include construction, demolition, earthworks, repair, restoration, refurbishment, installation of equipment and the work of tradespeople such as plasterers, carpenters and glazers.

Where a contract is below the “works” threshold and includes a mixture of works and goods or services, the council must consider whether the goods or services could be supplied under a separate contract. If they could and the value of that contract would exceed the "goods and services" threshold, the council must follow the rules in Section 5 of the 2023 Act to determine whether the whole contract should be treated as an above-threshold contract.

For a contract that will run for several years, the total value over the life of the contract (not the annual value) is used to determine whether the contract exceeds the relevant threshold. This must include anything that would potentially become payable because of an option in the contract to extend or renew it without competition. For example, if a three-year contract has the option of a two-year extension, the estimated value should be the amount payable over the five-year period.

Councils must not deliberately underestimate the value of contracts or artificially split them to avoid following the rules.

Exemptions
Specific types of contracts (set out in Schedule 2 of the 2023 Act) are exempt from tendering requirements due to the nature of the activity or the relationship between the parties involved.

Examples of contracts excluded due to the nature of the relationship include:

Contracts with an entity that the council controls (such as a local authority trading company).
Arrangements between cooperating authorities to achieve common goals for their public functions.
Contracts excluded due to their nature include:

Purchase of land, buildings or related rights.
Legal representation in disputes and the services of notaries.
Alternative dispute resolution.
Public broadcasting and public electronic communications services.
Loans and Investments.
Employment.
Emergency services.
Public transport (which is covered by separate Regulations).
Councils should refer to the detailed definitions in Schedule 2 of the 2023 Act and should not assume that a contract is exempt from tendering without checking.

Local councils are unlikely to be involved in light-touch contracts, which are for specified social, health, education and other public services provided directly to individuals or groups of people.

The rules for utility contracts are unlikely to be relevant to local councils as they relate to the distribution of gas, heat, electricity or water to the public through fixed networks.

Similarly, a few councils will be affected by the rules for concession contracts, where part of the consideration for the supply is a right for the supplier to exploit the works or services. These rules only apply above the "works" threshold.

Direct awards
A council may also directly award a contract without competition in specific circumstances set out in Schedule 5 of the 2023 Act. This includes:

Avoiding receiving goods that are incompatible with existing stock (for example, obtaining street light columns that match the existing ones).
Creation of a work of art or artistic performance.
Situations where there is only one supplier and the goods or services cannot be obtained anywhere else.
Contracts where the terms are particularly advantageous due to the fact that a supplier is undergoing insolvency proceedings.
Situations of unforeseen extreme urgency, not arising from any action or omission of the council.
Preliminary Market Engagement
Before inviting tenders, a council may engage with potential suppliers and others to develop the council's requirements and approach. This can include designing a procedure, conditions of participation or award criteria, preparing the tender documents and contractual terms, identifying the existence of potential suppliers or building capacity among suppliers.

Preliminary market engagement is not part of the tender process; it is something that takes place before a council invites participation. A council must ensure that anyone involved in the preliminary engagement does not gain an unfair advantage and that competition is not distorted. Where an advantage cannot be avoided, a council may have to exclude the supplier involved from participation in the tender process.

Duty to consider lots
Before publishing an above-threshold tender notice, a council must consider whether the goods, services or works could reasonably be supplied under more than one contract, and if so, whether such contracts could be awarded in lots.

Splitting a procurement into smaller lots does not remove the requirement to carry out the tendering process in accordance with the 2023 Act.

Tender process
The 2023 Act sets out principles that a council must have regard to:

Delivering value for money.
Maximising public benefit.
Sharing information to let suppliers understand the council's procedures.
Acting, and being seen to act, with integrity.
For above-threshold contracts that are not exempt, the 2023 Act requires councils to use a competitive tendering procedure that provides suppliers with the chance to bid for public contracts on a level playing field.

A tender process ensures that all bids are kept secret and opened together so that nobody can give any bidder an advantage by disclosing their competitor's figures. It

also generally involves pricing against a detailed specification, rather than simply giving a fixed price for the work, to make it easier for councils to compare tenders.

The invitation to tender notice (Form UK4) must be advertised on the government's Central Digital Platform (Find-Tender) in accordance with the 2023 Act, and there are two procedures a council can follow:

Open tender procedure — Anyone can submit a tender, and all responses are assessed together.
Competitive flexible procedure — Can include several stages to reduce the number of bids considered, such as inviting requests to participate or imposing conditions of participation.
Procedures must be proportionate to the contract's nature and complexity.

Before publishing a tender invitation, a council must define its criteria for assessing the tenders, indicate the relative importance of each criterion and describe how tenders will be measured against them.

One of the key requirements for any award criteria is that they must be sufficiently clear, measurable and specific. A council may find it useful to read the Government guidance on award criteria before designing a tender selection process, to ensure that they can clearly explain how they reached their decision.

Framework agreements
A framework agreement is where a council contracts with one or more suppliers for the future award of contracts for a period of up to four years. These are typically used to set fixed prices for regular work. A competitive process is used to set up the agreement and allow suppliers to participate. This generally sets prices in advance, so the council doesn't have to go out to competition for every contract.

Local councils are unlikely to have their own framework agreements, and the guidance for the 2023 Act indicates that the government aren't expecting to see framework agreements below the £207,720 threshold.

If a principal authority has a framework agreement in place for certain services and has included local parishes within that agreement, councils may be entitled to procure services (for example, tree works or street light column installation) through the framework agreement, rather than having to seek quotes.

The Crown Commercial Service has a number of framework agreements available to the public sector, and its website gives a description of how the process works.

Awarding an above-threshold contract
A council may award a contract to the supplier that it considers has submitted the most advantageous tender. This should be the tender that satisfies the council's requirements and best meets the award criteria that the tenders were assessed against.

Before awarding a contract above the relevant threshold, a council must provide an assessment summary to each supplier that submitted an assessed tender under Section 50 of the 2023 Act, explaining their assessment of the submitted tender and also the successful tender.

A "contract award notice" (Form UK6) must then be published on Find-Tender, and the council must wait eight working days (the "standstill period") before the contract can be awarded.

This is a notice that the council intends to award a contract and the standstill period gives time for an aggrieved participant to commence legal proceedings. Section 101 of the 2023 Act prevents a council from awarding a contract where it has been notified that proceedings have commenced.

Once it has awarded an above-threshold contract, the council must publish a Contract Details Notice (Form UK7) on Find-Tender within 30 days of awarding the contract to a supplier, regardless of the process used to choose the contractor. Form UK7 is designed to gather the information required by the Regulations.

Part Two — Below threshold procurement
Ensuring competition
Where the full requirements of the 2023 Act do not apply, councillors and officers still have a general duty to achieve economy, efficiency and effectiveness (often referred to as value for money) when spending public funds. Auditors are required to check that these arrangements are in place.

Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that councils have Standing Orders "for securing competition for contracts" and "regulating the manner in which tenders are invited". Using a formal tender process for every purchase would be slow and time-consuming, so the Act allows councils to exempt contracts from tendering if they are below a chosen value, or where exemption is justified by special circumstances.

Each council must set a level at which it will use a formal tender process to ensure fair competition. The default value in the NALC Model Financial Regulations is £60,000 plus VAT, but councils can change this to suit their own needs.

Formal tenders are not required for items below the value the council specifies. A council can seek quotes or estimates in accordance with its Financial Regulations.

Publication of below-threshold tender invitations
It is a common misconception that all contracts over £30,000 must be advertised and must use a tender process. Note 538 to the 2023 Act explains that this is not the case: A contracting authority conducting a below-threshold procurement is not required to advertise the contract in question but may choose to do so. Subsection [87](1) requires that if a contracting authority intends to advertise a procurement publicly, it must first publish a "below-threshold tender notice", as defined in subsection [87](5).

Paragraph 15 of the government's Guidance: Below-Threshold Contracts explains: This gives contracting authorities undertaking a below-threshold procurement greater flexibility in designing and running a procurement and awarding and managing the resulting contract. This flexibility (which may be subject to local policies and procedures) might include, for example, the ability to choose to award a contract without competition, to request quotes from targeted known suppliers only, or to restrict the award of contracts to suppliers that are UK-based or located in a specific

county or borough of the UK or to suppliers who are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), or voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSEs).

Paragraph 23 adds that "There is no requirement to publish a below-threshold tender notice where the contracting authority invites quotes, proposals or tenders from a closed group of pre-selected suppliers, or from one or more targeted individual suppliers, provided it does not advertise the procurement in any other way".

Contracts above £30,000, including VAT (that are not exempt from the 2023 Act), are referred to as "Notifiable below-threshold contracts". A council has specific notification obligations if it decides to issue an open invitation to tender above that value, and also when it awards a contract above that value to a supplier. These are explained below.

Section 87(1) of the 2023 Act requires that a council issuing an open invitation to tender must publish the invitation notice on Find-Tender before it appears anywhere else, if the estimated value is above £30,000, including VAT. Notification is not required if a council restricts the tender invitation to "particular or pre-selected suppliers".

Unlike the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, which referred to "contract opportunities", the 2023 Act specifically refers to tender invitations. The requirement to advertise does not apply if a council seeks fixed price quotes, design proposals or uses any approach other than a tender invitation.

Section 85 of the 2023 Act generally prevents councils from including a pre-qualification stage (such as a pre-qualification questionnaire) in a below-threshold tender process. They must not restrict any supplier from submitting a tender by assessing their legal, financial, technical or other suitability to perform the contract before the invitation is issued. That assessment should only be done once tenders are received.

There is an exception to this rule, and a supplier’s suitability can be assessed in advance for "works" contracts that are estimated to be above the value of the goods and services threshold (currently £207,720 including VAT).

Publishing the details of an awarded contract
For any notifiable contract over £30,000 including VAT, the council must publish a Contract Details Notice (Form UK7) on Find-Tender within 90 days of awarding the contract to a supplier, regardless of the process used to choose the contractor. The post-award publication requirement in Section 87(3) of the 2023 Act refers to "contracts" rather than "tenders".

The content of the notice is specified in Regulation 36 of the Procurement Regulations 2024 (Regulation 37 of the regulations for Wales), and Form UK7 is designed to gather the required information. There is guidance in paragraphs 25 and 39-43 of the government guidance for below-threshold contracts.

Procurement below £30,000
No part of the 2023 Act applies to any procurement where the estimated value is less than £30,000, including VAT. Councils must follow their own financial regulations,

which should specify the maximum value for purchases without getting estimates and set the value at which the council will seek fixed-price quotes rather than estimates.

Sometimes a contract is expected to be less than £30,000 including VAT, but the value turns out to be higher when the contract is signed. There is no requirement to go back and start the procurement process again, but the council will need to publish a Contract Details Notice as described in the section above.

Note: In Wales, ‘Sell2Wales’ applies rather than the Find Tender service.