

Community Councils

Standing Orders – the rules



Meetings



All Community Council meetings must be held in public.

Ordinary meetings are the ones that community councils hold to deal with their normal business.

Normally, these are arranged in a regular schedule, for example monthly, so that people in the community know when they take place.



A **Chairperson** leads a meeting and is responsible for making sure it runs well.

The Chairperson can arrange a Special Meeting at any time if:

- at least half of the total number of Community Council members have asked for it
- or if they get a **petition** signed by at least 20 people in the Community Council area



A **petition** is a written request to ask an organisation to do something.

request



meeting

A special meeting will be held before 14 days have passed after the request was made.



Annual general meetings are held once a year.

The Secretary must send the date, time and place of any meeting to each member and the local authority's named official at least 10 days before the date of the meeting.



Every Local Authority has a named official who works with community councils to help them and to make sure that they work within the rules set out for community councils.

Minutes



Minutes of Community Council meetings will be made within 14 days from the date of that meeting.

Minutes should be posted in public places like libraries, noticeboards, or online.

Minutes will be sent to everyone who was at the meeting, or who sent their apologies.



At the next Community Council meeting the minutes will be approved and signed by the Chair.

Quorum



A **quorum** is the number of people who must be at a meeting before it can go ahead.

A Community Council quorum is:

- one-third of the members who can vote
- or 3 voting members

whichever is the most.

Order of Business – what we will talk about and when



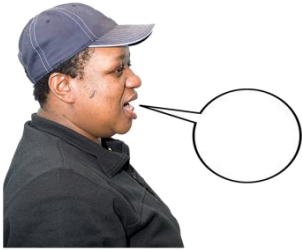
An Ordinary meeting can be arranged to start at the end of the Annual General Meeting.

For an Ordinary Meeting the order of business will be:

- take a note of who is at the meeting and who sent apologies to say they could not come



- the minutes of the last meeting are given for the meeting to agree they are correct



- any other item of business that the Chairperson thinks should be talked about

- any other competent business – this means anything else that we need to talk about



- questions

- the Chairperson will give the date of the next meeting and close the meeting



For an Annual General Meeting the order of business will be:

- take a note of who is at the meeting and who sent apologies to say they could not come



- the minutes of the last annual general meeting are given for the meeting to agree they are correct



- Chairperson's Annual Report and answering of any questions



- Secretary's Annual Report and answering of any questions
- the Treasurer will hand in the **Annual Accounts** and answer any questions



Annual accounts are a record of what money has come into the Community Council and how much has been spent in the past year.

These have been checked by an organisation that is not connected to the Community Council.



- **resignation** of current **office bearers**

Resignation means the person wants to leave that job.

An **office bearer** is a person with a specific duty or job in a group, like a Secretary, or Chairperson.



- election of office bearers

- Chairperson will say what the date of next annual general meeting will be

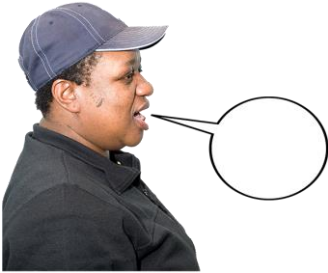


- Chairperson will close the meeting



For an Extraordinary General Meeting the order of business will be:

- take a note of who is at the meeting and who sent apologies to say they could not come



- **business for debate** – what needs to be discussed



- Chairperson to close meeting

What can be asked at meetings?



The Chairperson decides what questions can be asked at meetings and in what order.

The Chairperson's decision is final and is not to be discussed.



The Chairperson will:

- make sure that issues that are discussed are important to the local community
- make sure that decisions are reached in a **democratic** way

Democratic means everyone can take part in making decisions by voting.



If there are bad disagreements at a meeting the Chairperson can stop the meeting and arrange it for another time.

Every **motion** or amendment shall be **moved and seconded**.



A **motion** is an idea that a Community Council member can put to the meeting for other members to vote on.

Moved means that someone agreed with the motion.

Seconded means that someone else agreed with them.





A motion or amendment cannot be taken back unless the mover and seconder agree.

A motion or amendment which goes against a previous decision will only happen 6 months after the decision is made.

Voting



Voting shall be taken by a show of hands of the people present who are **eligible** to vote.

Eligible to vote means the rules say they are allowed to vote.

At an annual general meeting, the election of office bearers may be held by **secret ballot**.



A **secret ballot** means you put your vote on a voting paper and put it into a ballot box so no-one can see who you have voted for.

One person counts all the votes to see who has got the most.



The Chairperson of a meeting can vote and has a **casting vote**.

A **casting vote** means they make the decision if there is the same number of votes for and against something.

Alteration of Standing Orders

An **alteration** means a change.

If a member wants to change Standing Orders they can do this if:

- they have told a meeting of the Community Council what they want to do
- at the meeting after that, the motion can be discussed
- the motion can then be proposed to the local authority

The local authority makes the final decision about any changes.



Committees

A committee is a group of people who meet for a specific reason.

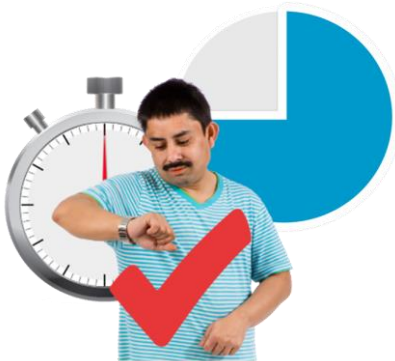




The Community Council can agree to have committees and decide:

- who will be on the committee
- terms of reference – what the committee will look at and talk about
- how long the committee will last for
- what the committee has the power to do

Suspension of Standing Orders



Suspended means stopped for a while.

Standing Orders can only be suspended:

- at a meeting where three-quarters of the total number of Community Council members are there
- if the person says why they want the standing order to be suspended
- and if two-thirds of Community Council members at the meeting agree

