

Staffordshire Moorlands



Parish Assembly

TERMS OF REFERENCE

AND

STANDING ORDERS

## **STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS PARISH ASSEMBLY**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The role of the Staffordshire Moorlands Parish Assembly is to provide a forum within which issues affecting the Staffordshire Moorlands Community can be debated and recommendations made to the District Council. In addition, the Staffordshire Moorlands Parish Assembly, at the request of the District Council, will appoint representatives to serve on advisory panels and outside bodies. The Assembly will not supplant any existing consultation procedures.

### **STANDING ORDERS**

#### **STANDING ORDER NO. 1 MEETINGS OF THE PARISH ASSEMBLY**

1. The Assembly shall hold an Annual Meeting in June/July of each year.
2. In addition to the Annual Meeting and any special meetings convened there shall be three other meetings each year for the conduct of general business.
3. The Chairman may convene a special meeting of the Assembly. A special meeting of the Assembly may be requisitioned by three Parish Councils, who are members of the Assembly, such a requisition to be delivered in writing to the Secretary of the Assembly, stating the business to be conducted. The meeting shall be held within three weeks.
4. Meetings of the Assembly will normally be held on a Thursday starting at 7:00 p.m.

#### **STANDING ORDER NO. 2 CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE PARISH ASSEMBLY**

1. The Chairman of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council shall act as Chairman of the Parish Assembly and a Vice-Chairman shall be appointed at the Annual Meeting for the ensuing year from amongst its members.

### **STANDING ORDER NO. 3**

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

1. Each Town/Parish Council in the Staffordshire Moorlands may appoint one representative who will vote on behalf of the Parish, and their name and contact details shall be notified to the Secretary before the Annual Meeting. Any subsequent permanent changes shall be notified as soon as possible. Each Town/Parish Council in the Staffordshire Moorlands may send as many delegates to the meetings as they wish.
2. The Leader of the Staffordshire Moorlands District Council shall be an ex-officio member of the Assembly.
3. If a Parish Representative is unable to attend a meeting the Representative or their Council may appoint a substitute.
4. The Chairman of the Assembly may invite outside bodies or individuals to attend meetings.

### **STANDING ORDER NO. 4**

#### **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

1. The order of business at meetings of the Assembly shall be:
  - (a) To choose a person to preside if both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are absent.
  - (b) To approve as a correct record and authorise the signing of the Minutes of the last meeting of the Assembly.
  - (c) To receive apologies of absence and details of substitutes.
  - (d) Chairman's announcements and correspondence.
  - (e) To receive any presentations.
  - (f) To receive any reports.
  - (g) To consider motions on the agenda.
  - (h) To consider items of business on the agenda.
  - (i) To consider items of business considered urgent by the Chairman.
2. To ensure a smooth flow of business the Chairman may change the order of items (e) to (h).

**STANDING ORDER NO. 5  
OFFICERS OF THE ASSEMBLY**

1. The Staffordshire Moorlands District Council shall provide a Secretary for the Assembly.

**STANDING ORDER NO. 6  
NOTIFICATION OF AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Items of business for the Assembly shall be notified to the Secretary in writing no later than four weeks before a meeting.

2. Motions on which the Assembly will be required to vote shall be similarly notified to the Secretary and must have the support of the Parish Council.

3. The Chairman of the Assembly shall determine the content of the agenda.

**STANDING ORDER NO. 7  
URGENT AGENDA ITEMS**

1. If a Parish Representative wishes to have an item of business considered after the agenda has been published, they may request, prior to the meeting, that the Chairman include it as urgent business. The inclusion of such an item is at the discretion of the Chairman (who must be given at least 24 hours notice).

**STANDING ORDER NO. 8  
RULES OF DEBATE**

1. Members of the Assembly shall indicate to the Chairman that they wish to speak and shall wait for the Chairman's invitation to speak. Debate shall be conducted with courtesy and respect and no Member may impugn the motives or use offensive expressions to any Member of the Assembly or Officer of the Assembly.

2. A Member shall direct his speech to the question under discussion.

3. A member shall only speak once in respect of any question under discussion, except that the proposer of a motion may both introduce the motion and wind up the debate.

**STANDING ORDER NO. 9  
VOTING**

1. Any item of business in respect of which a decision is required shall not be determined unless by show of hands by representatives present. Each Parish shall have one vote.
2. The Chairman shall have the casting vote.

**STANDING ORDER NO. 10  
QUORUM**

1. Any item of business in respect of which a decision is required shall not be determined unless there is present representatives of at least one third of the Parish Councils who are members of the Assembly.

**STANDING ORDER NO. 11  
MEMBERS' INTEREST**

1. A Member of the Assembly who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or other interest in a matter arising at a meeting of the Assembly shall disclose it, unless it is insignificant or one that is shared with other members of the public generally as a council tax payer or inhabitant of the area.

**STANDING ORDER NO. 12  
MINUTES**

1. Minutes of meetings shall be distributed to Members of the Assembly, Parish Clerks and District Council Chief Officers within four weeks of the meeting.
2. As the Minutes are circulated before the meeting they shall be taken as read.
3. Discussion shall not take place upon the Minutes except upon their accuracy and any question of their accuracy shall be raised by motion.
4. When a motion as to the accuracy of the Minutes has been approved the Chairman shall sign them.

**STANDING ORDER NO. 13  
INTERPRETATION OF STANDING ORDERS**

1. The ruling of the Chairman as to the construction or application of any of these Standing Orders, or as to any proceedings of the Assembly, shall not be challenged at any meeting of the Assembly.

**STANDING ORDER NO. 14  
ATTENDANCE OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

1. Meetings of the Parish Assembly shall be open to the Press and Public.

2. Such attendance shall not, however extend to the consideration by the Assembly of any confidential business, the content of which may be prejudicial to the public interest and following agreement between the Chairman of the Assembly and the Secretary the Press and Public may be excluded from the meeting.