



Stamfordham Parish Council – Standing Orders - May 2026

Version: May 2026

Adopted: May 2026

Review Date: May 2027

Based on the Northumberland Association of Local Council's Standing Orders for smaller councils

1. Councillors

- 1.1. Following election or co-option to the Council, each councillor will receive a copy of the Council's Code of Conduct, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and other relevant briefing material.
- 1.2. All councillors must observe the Code of Conduct and act in a manner that does not bring the Council into disrepute.
- 1.3. Councillors must declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Registerable Interest at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.4. The Council may grant a dispensation to a councillor in accordance with the Localism Act 2011. Any dispensation granted will be recorded in the minutes.

2. Annual Meetings

- 2.1. In an election year, the Annual Meeting of the Council must be held within 14 days following the election.
- 2.2. The first business of the Annual Meeting will be the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair.
- 2.3. The retiring Chair may provide a report on the activities of the Council during the previous year.

3. Meetings

- 3.1. Meetings will be held in accessible accommodation and publicly notified at least three clear working days before the meeting.
- 3.2. The agenda and summons will be issued electronically unless otherwise requested.
- 3.3. Meetings will be open to the public and press except where confidential business is being considered.
- 3.4. Members of the public may record meetings in accordance with relevant legislation.
- 3.5. A public participation period of up to 15 minutes will normally be provided before the formal meeting commences. Individual speakers may be limited to 3 minutes at the discretion of the Chair.
- 3.6. The Council may only make decisions on matters listed on the published agenda.
- 3.7. The quorum for meetings shall be one third of councillors, with a minimum of three members present.
- 3.8. Voting will normally be by show of hands unless a ballot is requested.
- 3.9. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chair shall have a casting vote.
- 3.10. Draft minutes should normally be circulated within three weeks of the meeting.



4. Emergency Business

- 4.1. In cases of urgency where it is impractical to convene a meeting, the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair where possible, may take necessary action on behalf of the Council.
- 4.2. Any action taken under delegated authority must be reported to the next available meeting.

5. Finance and Procurement

- 5.1. The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) shall be appointed by the Council.
- 5.2. The Council shall approve an annual budget and precept.
- 5.3. Financial management shall comply with the Council's Financial Regulations, Accounts and Audit Regulations, and Proper Practices.
- 5.4. All expenditure must be properly authorised by the Council or under delegated authority.
- 5.5. Procurement and contract management shall comply with the Procurement Act 2023 and current NALC guidance.
- 5.6. Electronic banking arrangements shall be operated in accordance with approved Financial Regulations.

6. Insurance and Risk Management

- 6.1. The Council shall maintain adequate insurance cover appropriate to its activities.
- 6.2. A risk assessment of Council activities and assets shall be reviewed annually.

7. Freedom of Information and Data Protection

- 7.1. The Council shall comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
- 7.2. The Council shall maintain an appropriate Publication Scheme and privacy arrangements.

8. Clerk to the Council

- 8.1. The Council shall appoint a Clerk who will act as Proper Officer of the Council.
- 8.2. The Clerk shall issue agendas, maintain minutes, manage records, and provide procedural advice to the Council.
- 8.3. The Clerk may also act as Responsible Financial Officer.

9. Committees and Working Groups

- 9.1. The Council may establish committees or working groups with defined terms of reference.
- 9.2. Committees and working groups shall report back to the Council.

10. Previous Decisions

- 10.1. A decision of the Council shall not normally be rescinded within six months unless included as a specific agenda item supported by at least two councillors.



11. Planning Applications

- 11.1. The Clerk has delegated authority to submit responses to planning applications following consultation with all councillors where the response deadline falls before the next scheduled Council meeting.
- 11.2. Any delegated response must reflect the majority view of councillors consulted and be reported to the next Council meeting.

12. Standing Orders

- 12.1. These Standing Orders shall be reviewed annually.
- 12.2. The Chair's interpretation of these Standing Orders during a meeting shall be final, subject to any legal advice obtained subsequently.
- 12.3. The Council may suspend Standing Orders by resolution for a specified purpose and duration.

13. Councillor and Officer Conduct

- 13.1. Councillors and officers shall maintain professional and respectful working relationships at all times.
- 13.2. No councillor shall direct or attempt to direct the work of an officer except through agreed Council processes.

14. Complaints and Communications

- 14.1. The Council shall maintain a complaints procedure.
- 14.2. Official communications and media statements on behalf of the Council shall normally be issued by the Clerk or Chair.