

## The Highland Council

### DRAFT - Community Council Standing Orders

#### 1. Meetings

1.1 Except where a decision is taken in accordance with section 11.1(h) of the Constitution of a Community Council in relation to specific items of business, all ordinary meetings of the Community Council shall be held in public.

1.2 **Ordinary** meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be held in the months of ..... [to be entered, minimum of 6 per year].

**Special Meetings** may be called at any time:

- by the Chair of the Community Council;
- on the written request of not less than one-half of the total number of COMMUNITY COUNCILLORS;
- or the receipt of a common written request (petition), signed by at least 20 persons, resident within the COMMUNITY COUNCIL area and eligible to vote, to convene a special meeting for a particular matter or matters to be debated such matter or matters to be specified in accordance with section 11.1 (g) of the Community Council's constitution.

A special meeting shall be held within 14 days of the receipt of the written request made to the Secretary of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL.

An **Annual General Meeting** will be held annually between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 30<sup>th</sup> June.

1.3 The notice of ordinary, annual general and special meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, featuring the date, time and venue, shall be provided to each COMMUNITY COUNCIL member and Highland Council's named officer by the Secretary of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, at least 7 days before the date fixed for the meeting.

## **2. Minutes**

- 2.1 Draft minutes of the proceedings of all meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be drawn up normally within fourteen days from the date of that meeting, distributed in accordance with Section 8 paragraph 8.3 of the Scheme and shall, following their approval, be signed at the next meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL by the person presiding thereat and retained for future reference. This excludes minutes pertaining to the Annual General meeting.

## **3. Quorum**

- 3.1 Quorum shall be 4 voting members of the Community Council for every meeting of the Community Council..
- 3.2 In order to minimise the risk of a meeting becoming inquorate members who require to declare an interest in any item of the agenda should give notice to one of the Office Bearers.

## **4. Order of Business**

### **4.1 Ordinary Meeting**

The order of business at every Ordinary Meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be as follows: -

- a) Recording of membership present and apologies received.
- b) The minutes of the previous ordinary meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be submitted for approval.
- c) Written Financial report from the Treasurer
- d) Any other item of business, which the Chairperson has directed, should be considered.
- e) Any other competent business.
- f) Questions or contributions from the public present
- g) Chairperson to declare date of next meeting and close meeting.

At the first meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL after elections in the year when elections are held, the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall elect a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer.

#### 4.2.1 Annual General Meeting

The order of business at every Annual General Meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be as follows: -

- a) Recording of Community Council membership present and apologies received.
- b) The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be submitted for adoption.
- c) Chairperson's Annual Report (and questions from the floor).
- d) Treasurer's submission of the Financial Statement duly independently examined and certified correct (and questions from the floor). Formal adoption of the Financial Statement should be proposed and seconded.
- e) Outwith election year, demit of current office bearers/election of office bearers. The Community Council may, at any time, vote to make changes to their office bearers.
- f) Chairperson to declare provisional date of next annual general meeting and close meeting.

4.2.2 An Ordinary meeting of the Community Council may follow directly on from an AGM.

#### 4.3 Special Meeting

The order of business at every Special Meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be as follows: -

- a) Recording of Community Council membership present and apologies received.
- b) Business for debate, as described in the written request for the Special meeting.
- c) Chairperson to close meeting.

#### 4.4 All Meetings

At the direction of the Chairperson, with the consent of the meeting:

- a) An item on the agenda may be taken out of order;
- b) An item not on the agenda may be considered in an emergency, provided any decision reached shall require to be retrospectively approved at the next Community Council meeting.

**5. Order of Debate**

- 5.1 The Chairperson shall decide all questions of order, relevancy and competency arising at meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and her/his ruling shall be final and shall not be open to discussion. In particular, the Chairperson shall determine the order, relevancy and competency of all questions or contributions from the public in attendance at meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL raised at 4, above. The Chairperson in determining the order, relevance and competency of business and questions shall have particular regard to the relevance of the issue to the community and ensure that the discussion and proceedings are conducted in such a manner that decisions are reached in a democratic manner. The Chairperson shall have the power, in the event of disorder arising at any meeting, to adjourn the COMMUNITY COUNCIL meeting to a time he/she may then, or afterwards, fix.
- 5.2 Every motion or amendment shall be moved and seconded.
- 5.3 A motion or amendment once made and seconded shall not be withdrawn without the consent of the mover and seconder thereof.
- 5.4 A motion or amendment which is contrary to a previous decision of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall not be competent within six months of that decision.

**6. Voting**

- 6.1 Voting shall be taken by a show of hands of those present and eligible to vote, with the exception that, at an annual general meeting, the election of office bearers may be held by secret ballot should the Community Council agree this approach.
- 6.2 The Chairperson of a meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall have a second and casting vote in the event of a tie during voting.
- 6.3 A Community Councillor may have his or her dissent recorded to a decision of the Community Council provided that he or she has moved a Motion or Amendment and failed to find a seconder or else has taken part in a vote provided that such member asks immediately after the item is disposed of that such dissent be recorded.

**7. Alteration of Standing Orders**

- 7.1 A proposal to alter these Standing Orders may be proposed to The Highland Council at any time by the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, provided that notice of motion to that effect is given at the meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL previous to that at which the motion is discussed. The Highland Council shall have final discretion on any proposed change.

**8. Committees**

- 8.1 The COMMUNITY COUNCIL may establish sub-committees and appoint Community Councillors to serve on these committees. The COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall determine the composition, terms of reference, duration, duties and powers of any sub-committee.

**9. Suspension of Standing Orders**

- 9.1 These Standing Orders shall not be suspended except at a meeting at which at least three-quarters of the total number of COMMUNITY COUNCILLORS are present and then only if the mover states, and if called upon by the Chairperson submits in writing, the object of his/her motion and if at least two-thirds of the COMMUNITY COUNCILLORS present consent to such suspension.

**10. Code of Conduct**

- 10.1 All Community Councillors will pay due regard to the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Community Councillors to be found at Appendix 5 of the Scheme.