

**ASKRIGG & LOW ABBOTSIDE PARISH COUNCIL**  
**STANDING ORDERS.**

**1. Annual Meetings**

If the Annual Meeting is in an election year it must be held within 14 days after the election. If it is not an election year then the annual meeting will take place on an appropriate day in May.

The current Chairman will take the meeting. The first business of the Annual Meeting is to elect a Chairman and Vice Chairman and to receive their acceptance of office.

The Chairman will report on the activities of the Council for the preceding year.

**2. Ordinary meetings**

Meetings are held bi-monthly in the back room of the Village Hall on a Wednesday at 7.30 p.m. Meeting dates for the year are usually agreed at the January meeting.

Councillors are advised of the meetings by the issue of a summons and agenda via email one week prior to the meeting.

Public notices are placed on the notice board and on the website informing members of the public the venue, time, date and business to be transacted at the meeting. These notices are displayed one week prior to the meeting.

Meetings are open to the public and press but they can be temporarily excluded from the meeting if the business is regarded as confidential.

Members of the public are allowed to speak at the discretion of the Chair of the meeting.

The agenda for the meeting is agreed by the Clerk and the Chairman. The agenda will always include an item to enable Councillors to declare interests.

The Chairman is responsible for the conduct of the meeting. If the Chairman is not present then the Vice Chairman will preside.

A quorum of 3 is required for business to be conducted. If there are insufficient members present the meeting will be reconvened at a later date.

Minutes of the meeting will be kept by the Clerk or other nominated person in the Clerk's absence. The minutes will be circulated as draft minutes until they are approved by the Parish Council at their next meeting and signed by the Chair. Minutes are published on the Website and are kept in a formal minute book.

**3. Finance**

The Responsible Finance Office (RFO) is a statutory office which is carried out by the Clerk in accordance with Proper Practices.

The Council meets in February to set the budget for the forthcoming year. The Clerk will prepare draft budgets and a record of income and expenditure from the current

year. During the year budgets will be reviewed against actual income and expenditure and any amendments minuted.

#### **4. Audit process**

The Clerk will complete the annual financial statements of the Council including the annual return as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year.

Council accounts and the annual return are reviewed by a system of internal audit.

The Clerk will submit the annual exemption certificate to PKF Littlejohn, who are the nominated external auditors for the Council, by the due date.

#### **Banking arrangements and cheques**

The Parish Council has a Barclays business account and a Barclays saving account.

All items of expenditure are authorised by the Council and payments approved at meetings. Payments are usually made by cheque, and stubs signed. The Clerks salary and PAYE are paid by standing order.

Amendments have had to be put in place due to COVID-19. The Parish Council has had to alter the way it pays invoices as a number of suppliers are not accepting cheques. One signatory has been set up with Barclays Bank and there are now three authorised signatories as follows Cllrs. B Fawcett, A Kirkbride and K Lynch (Clerk) For security purposes an audit trail of payments is as follows:-

- Clerk will email B Fawcett and A Kirkbride requesting payment of the invoice.
- A copy of the invoice will be attached to the email
- On agreement of payment, the Clerk will pay the supplier via BACs. A copy of the email, invoice and a copy of the Barclays payment schedule are stapled together and placed in the invoice paid folder.

#### **5. Assets**

The Clerk ensures the Register of Assets is maintained by the Council. This should be reviewed annually.

#### **6. VAT**

The Parish Council is VAT registered. The Clerk is responsible for the reclaiming of VAT annually where applicable.

#### **7. Insurance**

The Parish Council is insured by BHIB and the cover includes Public Liability, Employment Liability.

#### **8. Freedom of information**

The Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act. The Clerk will ensure the Council conforms to the requirements of the Act allowing public access to the appropriate documents.

#### **9. Clerk to the Council**

The Clerk is responsible for the day to day function of the Parish Council and as the role of Responsible Financial Officer. She will prepare and issue agendas, notices of meetings; receive and distribute plans and documents on behalf of the Council. The Clerk is a paid post and therefore has a contract of employment stating the terms and conditions of the post.

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