



**Comhairle Contae  
Loch Garman  
Wexford  
County Council**

**GNATH RIALACHA  
STANDING ORDERS**

**Adopted by Wexford County Council 9 November 2020**

# **COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LOCH GARMAN**

## **STANDING ORDERS**

### **Date of Meeting**

1. Unless upon any occasion when it is otherwise fixed by statute or by resolution of the Council, Ordinary Meetings of the Council shall be held monthly on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month. A schedule of Ordinary Meetings of the Council for the ensuing year shall be approved at each Annual Meeting.

### **Annual Meeting**

2. In every year in which a local election is held the Annual Meeting shall be held on the fourteenth day after the polling day or, where the poll is for any reason countermanded, interrupted or adjourned, after the day on which the poll is completed or the fresh poll is held.

Where the fourteenth day is an excluded day the meeting shall be held on the next following day which is not an excluded day.

In every other year the Annual Meeting shall be on such day within the period 14 days either side of the anniversary of the first annual meeting, provided that the date of the Annual Meeting falls in the months of May or June.

Whenever an Annual Meeting is for any reason not held on the appointed day the Meetings Administrator shall, following consultation with the Cathaoirleach, or if the office of Cathaoirleach is vacant or he / she is unable to act, with the Leas-Cathaoirleach, convene a meeting for a day which the Administrator considers to be the earliest convenient date for that purpose.

In an election year the local authority shall publish a notice of its Annual Meeting in at least one newspaper circulating in its administrative area. The notice shall state the date of the annual meeting and where appropriate that the first business of the meeting will be the election of the Cathaoirleach, and specify the joint bodies and other bodies to which the local authority is entitled to make appointments at that meeting or subsequently. The notice shall be in a form and published within the period prescribed by regulations.

In the case of an Annual Meeting in an election year and until the election of the Cathaoirleach at such meeting, the Chair for this period shall be taken by a member or an employee selected by the meeting for this purpose. Any member selected to chair an annual meeting under this subparagraph shall not have a second or casting vote and any employee of the local authority if so selected in accordance with this subparagraph shall not have any vote.

At an Annual Meeting in an election year the Meetings Administrator shall read out the names of persons duly elected as members of the local authority. Subject to this the election of a Cathaoirleach is to be the first business of an Annual Meeting and the next business, the election of a Leas-Cathaoirleach.

In the case of the Annual Meeting in an election year the business to be transacted after the election of the Cathaoirleach and the Leas-Cathaoirleach shall include

- the consideration of the election, appointment or nomination of members of joint bodies or other bodies elected, appointed or nominated by the local authority and
- fixing the day or days for the first meetings of the municipal district members for each of the municipal districts within the functional area of the local authority, so long as the day or days so fixed shall not be later than 10 days after the annual meeting of the local authority and not be an excluded day.

### **Local Authority Budget Meeting**

3. A Local Authority Budget Meeting shall be held in accordance with Section 103 of the Local Government Act 2001 within the period directed by the Minister for the purposes of that section.

### **Special Meeting**

4. A Special Meeting of the Council may be convened at any time by the Cathaoirleach or if the office of Cathaoirleach is vacant or the Cathaoirleach is unable to act, by the Leas-Cathaoirleach, or by the Cathaoirleach on foot of a request in writing presented to him or her by any five members.

Where the Cathaoirleach refuses or neglects to act on foot of a request within 7 days of it being presented to him/her, the members making the request may convene a meeting. The provisions of paragraph 6 of Sch. 10 apply in relation to calling of such meeting.

### **Hour of Meeting**

5. The hour of meeting of the Council shall be 2.30 p.m. or at such other hour as may from time to time be fixed by resolution of the Council. The Council shall rise not later than 5.30 p.m.

### **Place of Meeting and Address of Principal Offices**

6. In so far as practicable the place for holding meetings of the Council shall be the principal offices of the local authority and meetings shall normally

be held there, provided that the Council may from time to time by resolution appoint an alternative location for a particular meeting.

The address of the principal offices for the purposes of these Standing Orders is County Hall, Carricklawn, Wexford.

#### 6 (a) Remote Meetings

Given the designation of local authorities, the meetings of the local authority may now be held at

- the Council Chamber
- an external venue used to accommodate meetings of the council
- one or more Council buildings or rooms, linked remotely
- an electronic, digital or virtual location, web address or a conference call telephone number
- a combination of the above to provide for physical and/or remote attendance by elected members.

#### 6 (b) Management of Remote Meetings

- (i) Members should notify their Meetings Administrator in advance if they intend to attend the meeting remotely.
- (ii) Any member participating in a meeting remotely must, when they are speaking, be able to be heard (and seen, where practicable) by all other members in attendance, and the remote participant must, in turn, be able to hear (and see, where practicable) those other members participating.
- (iii) The Cathaoirleach will at the outset, and at any reconvening of a meeting, conduct a roll call of participating members and ensure that they can hear and, where practicable, see those in attendance. Any member participating remotely should also confirm at the outset and at any reconvening of the meeting that they can hear and, where practicable, see the proceedings.
- (iv) Members should inform the Meetings Administrator if they lose connection during the meeting
- (v) The attendance of those members attending the meeting remotely will be recorded by the Meetings Administrator.
- (vi) The normal quorum meeting requirement continues to apply to a remote meeting. Members attending physically and remotely will together constitute a quorum.

- (vii) At the commencement of the meeting, each member participating remotely has personal responsibility to ensure and confirm to the Meetings Administrator that there are no other persons present who are not entitled to either hear or see consideration of the meeting discussions.
- (viii) Subject to compliance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), the Meeting Administrator may facilitate the recording of the meeting for the purposes of taking minutes. However, this recording shall only be used for this purpose and will be deleted once the minutes are agreed.
- (ix) No other recording of the meeting and its proceedings by any person, including elected members and attending members of the media, shall be allowed

#### 6 (c) Meeting Procedures

- (i) The Meetings Administrator will coordinate the facilitation of the meeting. He / She or another appropriate official will assume responsibility for controlling the conferencing technology employed for remote access and attendance, and to administer the member interaction, engagement and connections on the instruction of the Cathaoirleach.
- (ii) Members should allow sufficient time to establish a connection prior to the commencement of the meeting to allow themselves and the Meeting Administrator the opportunity to test the connection.
- (iii) The Cathaoirleach, or at the Cathaoirleach's request, the Meetings Administrator, shall, at the beginning of the meeting explain the protocol for members' participation. The Cathaoirleach's ruling during the debate will be final.
- (iv) Members who wish to speak should use the notification process as directed by the Cathaoirleach, and then speak when invited.
- (v) The rules of debate as set out in existing standing orders will apply.
- (vi) All meeting attendees attending remotely shall, other than when speaking, mute their microphone so as not to cause undue interference to the business of the meeting.

#### 6 (d) Voting

- (i) A vote taken of members attending physically and/or remotely in accordance with the Standing Orders of the local authority constitutes a valid vote towards the decision of the Council.

- (ii) Any vote taken at a remote meeting shall be taken by roll-call vote.
- (iii) Where a member loses connectivity during a statutory vote, every effort will be made to re-establish a connection. If a connection cannot be restored within a reasonable timeframe every effort will be made to contact the member by phone. Where phone contact is made in such circumstances, the member shall be entitled to vote by phone by advising the Cathaoirleach of his or her vote, which shall be played to the attendance over microphone and the vote recorded accordingly.
- (iv) Where contact with the remote member cannot be established, at the discretion of the Cathaoirleach, the vote may be deferred to a later time in the meeting. Any and all such deferred votes shall be taken before the end of the meeting, unless the Council votes to defer to another meeting.
- (v) Where contact / connection with the member cannot be established before the end of the meeting, that member shall be deemed to have left the meeting and the vote(s) in question shall proceed in their absence in accordance 6(d)(iv) above.

#### 6 (e) Leaving a Remote Meeting

- (i) Members attending remotely who leave the meeting should make every effort to inform the Cathaoirleach by the appropriate means that they are exiting the meeting to ensure there is a Quorum remaining and so that it is not presumed to be a loss in connectivity.

#### 6 (f) Declaration of Interests

- (i) Any Member participating remotely at a meeting who declares a disclosable pecuniary or other beneficial interest, under Part 15 of the Local Government Act 2001, in any item of business that would normally require them to leave the room, must also leave the remote meeting, advising the Cathaoirleach and members at the time of departure and this shall be recorded in the minutes.
- (ii) Their departure will be confirmed by the Meetings Administrator, who will arrange for the relevant Member to be invited to re-join the meeting at the appropriate time.

#### 6 (g) Attendance of Public and Media at a Remote Meeting (Section 45(3) Local Government Act 2001 – 2014)

- (i) Members of the public and media may be present at a remote meeting which is not webcast live but must maintain silence and

observe any directions given by the Chair or by any employee in attendance.

- (ii) Members of the media and public who attend the meeting remotely should provide notice of their attendance to the Cathaoirleach on joining the meeting. To manage numbers and attendance, the meetings administrator may consider utilising electronic invitations compatible with the platform in use.
- (iii) Where the authority is webcasting live, attendance of public and media is via that means.

#### 6 (h) MEETINGS IN COMMITTEE

- (i) In line with the provisions of Section 45 of the Local Government Act 2001, the Council may by resolution decide to meet in committee for the whole or part of the meeting concerned.
- (ii) Should the Council elect to meet in Committee for some or all of the meeting the Meetings Administrator or designated person will ensure that there are no members of the public or media in remote attendance or remotely accessing the meeting or are able to hear or see the proceedings once the exclusion has been agreed by the meeting.
- (iii) Where the Council has by resolution decided to meet in committee for the whole or part of the meeting concerned, each member participating remotely has personal responsibility to ensure and confirm to the Meetings Administrator that there are no other persons present who are not entitled to be either hearing or seeing consideration of such items, and/or recording the proceedings. The Meetings Administrator shall call on each member participating remotely to so confirm, and such confirmations shall be noted in the minutes, before commencement of discussion on the matter at hand.

### **Summoning of Meeting**

7. A notification to attend a meeting, other than a local authority budget meeting shall (a) be sent by e-mail or otherwise delivered to each member of the Council, (b) specify the place, date and time of the meeting, and (c) give not less than 3 clear days notice. The 3 clear days shall only exclude (i) normal day for receipt of the notice, and (ii) the day of the meeting.

A notification shall include or be accompanied by an Agenda listing the business to be transacted at the meeting. Subject to Standing Order 20 no business shall be transacted at a meeting other than that specified in the Agenda which relates to the meeting or business required by the Act, or otherwise by law to be transacted at the meeting.

An Agenda which has been sent or delivered for this purpose may be altered (whether by way of addition, deletion or otherwise) if an Agenda specifying the alteration is delivered or sent to each member not less than 3 clear days before the day on which the meeting is to be held.

In the case of a Special Meeting convened by requisition under Standing Order 4, a copy of the requisition shall be sent with the notification.

8. A notification shall have the signature of the Meetings Administrator and any document claiming to have that signature shall be deemed, until the contrary is proved to have been duly issued or given with the authority of the local authority.

Want of service or non-receipt of a notification by any member or lack of a signature or any other defect in the notification does not affect the validity of a meeting or of any act or thing done at the meeting.

For the purposes of this Standing Order "signature" includes a facsimile of a signature by whatever process reproduced or a printed version of the name of the Meetings Administrator.

### **Public Notice of Meeting**

9. Public notice of the place, date and time of a meeting other than a local authority budget meeting shall be displayed not less than 3 clear days before the day of the meeting in or at the principal offices of the local authority in a position convenient for public inspection during normal office hours.

The Notice shall include the Agenda for the meeting or specify a place where the Agenda can be inspected and in the case of a meeting requisitioned under Standing Order 4 the Agenda shall include or be accompanied by a copy of the requisition.

Subject to any arrangements as it may make the local authority shall supply a copy of a public notice and agenda to the media

### **Constitution of Meetings**

10. The Chair shall be taken by the Cathaoirleach at a meeting of the Council within 15 minutes after the time appointed for such meeting or in his / her absence by the Leas-Cathaoirleach or otherwise by a Member called thereto by general agreement or chosen by vote of the members present to chair the meeting and such member shall leave the chair on the arrival at the meeting of the Cathaoirleach or Leas-Cathaoirleach.
11. The names of the members attending shall be recorded in the following manner - each member shall enter their name in the Attendance Register.

A Member who wishes to leave the meeting early shall formally notify the Cathaoirleach of his/her intention to leave the meeting and the time of departure will be noted in the minutes.

12. The quorum for a meeting of the local authority is one-fourth of the total number of members of the local authority plus one or, where one-fourth of such total number is not a whole number; the quorum is the next highest whole number plus one. (10)

Whenever a meeting of the local authority is abandoned owing to failure to obtain a quorum the names of those present at the time and place appointed for such meeting shall be recorded by the Meetings Administrator and they shall for all purposes be deemed to have attended a duly constituted meeting.

If a quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the time fixed for the meeting [or at any time during the meeting], the meeting shall stand adjourned to a day to be named by the Cathaoirleach.

### **Order of Business**

13. The Order of Business at all meetings other than Annual Meetings, Local Authority Budget Meetings and Special Meetings shall, subject to the provisions of any enactments, be as follows:

- (i) Confirmation of Minutes.
- (ii) Business required by Statute to be done at the Meeting.
- (iii) Urgent Correspondence.
- (iv) Business adjourned from a previous Meeting, if directed by An Cathaoirleach or An Chomhairle.
- (v) Report of Corporate Policy Group, other Committees, Progress and Other Reports.
- (vi) Election of members of An Chomhairle or Committees.
- (vii) Sealing of Documents.
- (viii) Correspondence and Communications.
- (ix) Notices of Motion.
- (x) Business specially brought forward by Direction of An Cathaoirleach.
- (xi) Times and Dates of Meetings

In the case of a meeting convened for a special purpose the business specified in the Notification for such meeting shall be transacted and no other business.

At any ordinary meeting of the Council it shall be proper, if a majority of the members present and voting so decide, to take an item for consideration out of the sequence of listing on the Agenda, provided always that such decision shall not affect any business required by Statute to be done before any other business at the meeting.

## Confirmation of Minutes

14. Minutes of the proceedings of a meeting of the local authority shall be drawn up by the Meetings Administrator.

The Minutes shall include -

- (a) the date, place and time of the meeting,
- (b) the names of the members present at the meeting,
- (c) the names of the senior employees of the local authority present at the meeting,
- (d) reference to any report submitted to the members at the meeting,
- (e) where there is a roll call vote, the number and names of members voting for and against the motion and of those abstaining,
- (f) particulars of all resolutions passed at the meeting,
- (g) such other matters considered appropriate.

A copy of the minutes of a meeting shall be sent or given by the Meetings Administrator to each member of the local authority.

Minutes of a meeting shall be submitted for confirmation as an accurate record at the next following ordinary meeting, where practicable, or where not, at the next following meeting and recorded in the minutes of that meeting.

When confirmed with or without amendment, the minutes of a meeting shall be signed by the person chairing the meeting they were submitted to for confirmation and any minutes claiming to be so signed shall be received in evidence without proof.

When the question that they be confirmed is put from the Chair, a Member may object to any part thereof as not being an accurate record and upon a motion any question of altering the record shall be determined by the Council by majority vote of those members who were present at the appropriate meeting; provided that no entry shall be made in the Minutes of any protest other than a record of dissent, save in the form of a motion or an amendment.

A copy of the minutes when confirmed in accordance with this Standing Order shall be open to inspection at the principal offices of the local authority and made available on the Council's website. Any person may inspect and make a copy of, or abstract from, the minutes during the usual office hours of the authority.

A copy of the minutes shall be provided to any person applying for them on payment of such reasonable sum, being a sum not exceeding the reasonable cost of supplying the copy, as may be fixed by the authority.

## **Notices of Motion**

- 15.** Every Notice of Motion dated and signed by the Member or Members giving it shall be delivered to the Meetings Administrator and shall be recorded in the order of their receipt and shall appear on the Agenda in that order.

A Notice of Motion shall be delivered to the Meetings Administrator before 12.00 noon on the Monday of the week prior to the holding of the Council Meeting at which the motion is to be heard i.e. at least 6 clear days before the date of such meeting.

- 16. (a)** If any Notice of Motion of which notice has been duly given relates to a matter normally dealt with by a Municipal District or any other Committee, or comes within the terms of reference of any Committee or Committees, it shall be referred to such Committee or Committees as the Meetings Administrator may determine. Any dispute on such reference shall be determined by the Cathaoirleach.

**(b)** Where a Notice of Motion is so referred to a Committee, the proposer of the motion shall be entitled to attend such committee meeting to put forward and debate the motion. The Member shall not have voting rights at the Committee meeting, save where he/she is already a Member of such committee.

- 17.** No member shall be permitted to have more than 2 motions (including adjourned motions) on the Agenda for any one meeting and the name of a member shall not appear more than 2 times on the Agenda as proposer or co-proposer of motions for any one meeting.

Where at a meeting or any adjournment thereof more than one notice of motion appears on the Agenda to be proposed by one or more individual members, no second notice of motion of any such members shall be proposed until after every other member shall have proposed the sole or first notice of motion appearing in the member's name. A similar order of precedence shall apply to any further notices of motion remaining to be proposed by two or more members.

## **Motions to Amend or Revoke Resolutions**

- 18.** A motion to revoke or amend a resolution of the Council can only be made on notice inserted in the Agenda, and such notice shall specify the resolution to be revoked or amended and furnish the terms of the motion to be made; but no such motion shall be allowed to appear on the Agenda to revoke or amend any resolution of Council within six months of the date of the adoption of such resolution except with the written assent of not less than 6 members of the Council. A resolution may not be revoked at the meeting at which it has been adopted.

It shall be necessary for adoption of a motion to revoke or amend a resolution of the Council that not less than 18 members [being not less than one-half of the total number of members of the Council] vote in favour.

19. Subject to Standing Order 18 any matter decided by the local authority by motion on notice or on the report of a committee shall not be re-opened within 6 months of the date of such decision.

### **Motion for Purpose of Dealing with Urgent Business**

20. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Standing Orders a motion may be proposed without notice for the purpose of dealing with urgent business related to a function of the local authority, subject to the requirement that not less than 18 members vote in favour.

### **Adjournment of Council**

21. A motion for adjournment of the Council may be made at any time and shall be determined without amendment and without debate, except that the mover of the Motion of adjournment and the mover of the Motion immediately affected by it, may each address the Council for not more than five minutes on the question of the adjournment ; and when the Motion for adjournment is adopted, the meeting will stand adjourned to a day then named or in the event of no such date being named, to the next occurring ordinary meeting.

A Special Meeting may be adjourned from time to time until its business is concluded.

### **Motions and Amendments**

22. The proposer of a motion not listed in the Agenda or an amendment, and not in common form, shall upon moving the same deliver a copy to the Chair.
23. A motion, notice of which stands in the Agenda and which has been proposed and seconded, may be withdrawn only on leave obtained from a majority of the Council present at the meeting at the request of the member concerned. A motion may either be proposed by the member in whose name it stands or if he or she be absent, by any member authorised by him or her in writing to propose it on his or her behalf, but unless so proposed, and in the absence of a request in writing from the member in whose name it stands to postpone it, the motion shall be dropped and shall not again be set down in the Notice Paper except on fresh notice. A motion or an amendment when not seconded is dropped.

24. An amendment which has been proposed and seconded may be withdrawn only on leave obtained from a majority of the Council members present at the meeting at the request of the member concerned.
25. Every amendment shall be relevant to the motion on which it is moved and shall be either (a) to leave out words, (b) to leave out words and insert or add others, (c) to insert or add words. An amendment shall not be in order if it is equivalent to a direct negative or if it is not in fact an amendment of the motion it purports to amend.
26. Whenever an amendment on an original motion has been moved and seconded, no second or subsequent amendment shall be moved until the first amendment shall have been disposed of, but notice of any second or subsequent amendment shall first have been given.
27. When an amendment is affirmed the original motion as amended becomes the substantive motion upon which any further amendment, of which notice has been given may be moved.
28. When an amendment is lost any further amendment of which notice has been given may be proposed, but only one amendment shall be at any time before the meeting and an amendment shall not be in order if the Chair rules it to be substantially the same as an amendment already lost.

### **Order of Debate**

29. Except with the permission of the Chair no member shall address the Council for more than 5 minutes. A member may speak once upon any item on the Agenda or on any motion except a motion which is to be put without debate. The proposer of a motion has the right to reply whilst the motion remains before the Chair and when the proposer replies the debate on the motion is closed.
30. No member who has spoken to a motion may move or second an amendment, but when an amendment is moved and seconded, a member who has already spoken to the original motion may speak to the amendment.
31. A member may speak more than once on the same motion or amendment for the purpose only of submitting a point of order or making a personal explanation. The Chair's decision in determining a point of order or personal explanation shall be final.
32. The Chair shall ascertain that a motion is seconded before the proposer is permitted to speak to it.
33. A motion "that the Council proceed to the next business" may be made after any motion has been proposed and seconded. When made it shall be determined without amendment or debate and if it be affirmed the business interrupted by such motion shall not be proceeded with further at

that meeting and unless the council otherwise determine shall be adjourned to the next ordinary meeting. The motion to proceed to next business shall not be made more than once during the debate on any question.

34. At any time during a discussion on a motion a member may move "that the question be now put" and if such leave be given by the assent of the majority of those present and voting, the motion shall be put, subject to the right of reply by the proposer of the original or substantive motion.
35. When two or more members at the same time offer to speak, the member called upon by the Chair shall have precedence.
36. A member while speaking shall address only Cathaoirleach.
37. A member speaking shall not be interrupted except upon a question of order, but may give way to a member desiring to make a personal explanation.
38. When a member seeks to make a point of order, the member then addressing the Chair shall give way until the question of order has been determined by the Chair, unless the former seeks to address the Chair upon the question of order.
39. The Chair is the sole judge of order in the Council and has authority to maintain order and enforce prompt obedience to his / her ruling. When during a debate the Chair rises, any member then speaking shall give way to the Chair.

### **Disorderly Conduct**

40. If at a meeting any member of the Council, in the opinion of the Chair notified to the Council, misconducts himself or herself by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair, or by wilfully obstructing the business of the meeting, the Chair or any other member may move "That the member named be not further heard", and the motion if seconded shall be put and determined without discussion.
41. If in the opinion of the Chair any member has been or is disorderly by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair, or by behaving irregularly, improperly or offensively or by otherwise obstructing the business of the meeting, and the Chair has conveyed his or her opinion to the members present by naming the member concerned, then the Chair or any member may move "that the member named leave the meeting" and the motion, if seconded, shall be put and determined without discussion.
42. Where the Council decides that a member leave a meeting, that member shall immediately leave the meeting and shall not be entitled to speak or to take any further part in that meeting on that day.

**43.** Where in the opinion of the Chair there is general disorder which impedes the orderly transaction of business or where a member against whom it was resolved that he or she leave the meeting refuses to do so, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for such period as he or she considers necessary in the interests of order.

**43A.** Where it has been resolved in accordance with Standing Order 41 that a member leaves a meeting and the chair adjourns the meeting under Standing Order 43 because the member refuses to leave,

**and** it has been resolved by further resolution that the member was the cause of the meeting being so adjourned,

then any remuneration to, and any allowances for expenses incurred, by that member concerned, as provided for by regulations under section 142 of the Local Government Act 2001, shall be reduced for the period of 12 months (irrespective of whether or not a local election is to be held during that period) from the date of the meeting concerned as set out in Paragraph 13 (4) (i) to (vi) of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2001, as inserted by Section 57 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

Where further disorderly conduct by the member takes place at a meeting, the provisions of Paragraph 13 (5) of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2001, as inserted by Section 57 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014 shall apply. These provisions include the suspension of the member, further suspension, the lifting of the suspension.

A member suspended under these provisions shall not be entitled to attend, speak at or take part in any meetings of the local authority, any committee of the local authority or any meeting of the municipal authority. Further restrictions regarding the calling of special meetings, receipt of papers and agendas and remuneration and allowances for expenses apply during the period specified in the resolution suspending a member while it remains in force.

**44.** No member shall address the Chair, unless from one of the seats reserved to the use of members.

### **Deputations**

**45.** Deputations shall be received by Committees subject to the direction of each Chair. 3 persons may speak on behalf of the deputation for not more than 10 minutes in total.

Request for a deputation to be heard by the respective Committee shall not be considered unless the subject matter to be raised be notified in writing to the Meetings Administrator, Secretary of the Committee/and or Chair at least 7 clear days before the date of the meeting.

The deputation must be limited to 5 in number and may only be questioned by members of the Council. Deputation members shall not be entitled to ask questions.

When the members of a deputation have addressed the meeting, they shall withdraw from the meeting.

### **Questions, Votes and Divisions**

46. Questions may be determined by a show of hands, where the Chair considers it appropriate, unless provided by Statute. Where the Chair or three members request a division, the names for and against the motion or amendment shall be taken down in writing and recorded in the Minutes. Use of an electronic voting system may also be used, if appropriate.
47. The Chair shall formally declare the result of each vote. Where the Chair has not formally declared the result of a vote, or is in doubt as to whether his / her declaration is right or wrong, s/he is entitled if s/he thinks fit to take a second vote on the matter, especially if s/he considers that through some misunderstanding the first vote did not properly represent the sense of the meeting at that time.
48. Each member present at a meeting of the Council shall have a vote unless prohibited by any enactment or a provision of these Standing Orders,
49. Without prejudice to any enactment or other provisions of these Standing Orders requiring either the presence of a specified number or proportion of the members or that a specified number or proportion should vote in favour for the doing of any particular act, all acts of the Council which are reserved functions or questions duly coming or arising before a meeting of the Council shall be determined - (a) by a majority of the members present and voting or where there is an equality of votes, by a second or casting vote of the person chairing the meeting (which person shall have and may choose to exercise such a vote).

### **Attendance of Public and Media**

50. The right of the public and representatives of the media to attend Council meetings is subject to the following :-

Where the Council is of opinion that the absence of members of the public and representatives of the media from the whole or part of a particular meeting is desirable because of the special nature of the meeting or of an item of business to be or about to be considered at the meeting or for other special reasons, the Council may, by resolution in respect of which, at least one-half of the total number of members vote in favour, decide to meet in committee for the whole or part of the meeting concerned. The resolution in this instance shall indicate in a general way the reasons for

the resolution and those reasons shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

51. Members of the public and representatives of the media will occupy the parts of the Meeting Room allotted to their use.

The public shall be admitted subject to the following arrangements:

Advance notice shall be given to the Meetings Administrator or Cathaoirleach as seating facilities are limited in the Chamber. Visitors are expected to comply with Health and Safety requirements.

52. Members of the public shall be seated and maintain silence and observe any directions given by the Chair or by any employee in attendance upon the Council. Such employees are responsible for the execution of all measures necessary for the maintenance of order and decorum in and about the Chamber.

If a member of the public interrupts a meeting at any time or endeavours, to address a Meeting, the Chair shall warn him or her and if the interruption continues shall order that person's removal.

In the case of a general disturbance in any part of the Meeting Room open to the public, the Chair shall order that part to be cleared.

53. No cameras of any kind, or sound recording or communication equipment, or social media may be used during "in committee" meetings of Wexford County Council. This includes "in committee" meetings of the Members of Gorey-Kilmuckridge, New Ross, Enniscorthy and Rosslare Municipal Districts and Wexford Borough District and also extends to "in committee" meetings of committees of Wexford County Council.

54. The use of mobile phones shall not be permitted at meetings of the Council.

## **COMMITTEES**

### **Strategic Policy Committees**

55. The Strategic Policy Committees of the Council shall be:

- Housing and Community Strategic Policy Committee
- Transportation and Water Services Strategic Policy Committee
- Economic Development and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee
- Planning and Building Control Strategic Policy Committee

- Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee

**56.** The Housing and Community Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) shall consist of 12 members, 8 of whom shall be members of the Council, and 4 to be nominated by sectoral, community and other interest groups throughout the County of Wexford, such sectoral, community and other interest groups having first been selected by the Council in accordance with the relevant guidelines.  
4 members shall constitute a quorum.

The Transportation and Water Services Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) shall consist of 11 members, 6 of whom shall be members of the Council, and 5 to be nominated by sectoral, community and other interest groups throughout the County of Wexford, such sectoral, community and other interest groups having first been selected by the Council in accordance with the relevant guidelines.  
4 members shall constitute a quorum.

The Economic Development and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) shall consist of 17 members, 9 of whom shall be members of the Council, and 8 to be nominated by sectoral, community and other interest groups throughout the County of Wexford, such sectoral, community and other interest groups having first been selected by the Council in accordance with the relevant guidelines.  
6 members shall constitute a quorum.

The Planning and Building Control Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) shall consist of 7 members, 4 of whom shall be members of the Council, and 3 to be nominated by sectoral, community and other interest groups throughout the County of Wexford, such sectoral, community and other interest groups having first been selected by the Council in accordance with the relevant guidelines.  
3 members shall constitute a quorum.

The Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) shall consist of 14 members, 7 of whom shall be members of the Council, and 7 to be nominated by sectoral, community and other interest groups throughout the County of Wexford, such sectoral, community and other interest groups having first been selected by the Council in accordance with the relevant guidelines.  
5 members shall constitute a quorum.

The Strategic Policy Committees shall be appointed as soon as possible after a local election and the members shall hold office for the period of the life of the Council appointing them.

57. The Council shall appoint a Cathaoirleach to each of the Strategic Policy Committees from among the members of the Council to hold office for a minimum period of three years which may be renewed by the Council and subsequent Cathaoirligh shall be appointed by the Council from among the existing Council members of the Strategic Policy Committee.
58. The Cathaoirligh and Council members of the Strategic Policy Committees shall reflect the proportionality and the distribution of elected representation on the Council; in default of agreement, the Cathaoirligh and Council members of the Strategic Policy Committees shall be appointed by the formation of groups pursuant to Paragraph 18 of Sch. 10.
59. Every member of the Council shall be a member of one of the Strategic Policy Committees.
60. It shall be the function of a Strategic Policy Committee to consider matters connected with the formulation, development, monitoring and review of policy which relate to the functions of the Strategic Policy Committee and the Local Authority and to advise the Authority on those matters.

For the purposes of assisting a Strategic Policy Committee in considering the above matters and to matters which relate to the functions of the local authority in relation to economic development and matters connected to the promotion of, including support for, enterprise, the Committee may request the attendance of a public authority at a meeting of the Committee.

In the event of the refusal or failure of the public authority to attend, the Cathaoirleach and the local authority may proceed to report the matter to the appropriate Minister in accordance with Section 48 (3) of the Local Government Act 2001, as amended by Section 41 (d) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

61. Each Strategic Policy Committee shall meet as often as required, and at least 3 times a year, to deal with the business assigned to it.

### **Corporate Policy Group**

62. The Cathaoirleach of the Council and the Cathaoirligh of the Strategic Policy Committees shall form the Corporate Policy Group, which shall meet as often as required under the chairmanship of the Cathaoirleach and shall provide a forum for discussion of policy affecting the whole Council and shall report to Council.

Without prejudice to its role in advising and assisting the elected council in the formulation, development, monitoring and review of policy, and with respect to the policies of and functions performed by the local authority,

the Corporate Policy Group may promote co-ordination, consistency, effectiveness and avoidance of duplication in the performance of functions of the local authority by municipal district members.

Where, for any period of time, the Corporate Policy Group does not contain a member from a municipal district, a member of each municipal district concerned may be selected by the municipal district members for such district to serve as a member of the Corporate Policy Group.

Failing such selection, the Cathaoirleach of the municipal district concerned or such other member of the municipal district concerned as the Cathaoirleach may select, shall serve as a member of the Corporate Policy Group.

### **Municipal Districts**

**63.** The Wexford Council shall be divided into 5 Municipal Districts as follows:

1. Wexford Borough District
2. Enniscorthy Municipal District
3. New Ross Municipal District
4. Gorey- Kilmuckridge Municipal District
5. Rosslare Municipal District

**64.** The members of Wexford County Council, elected in accordance with the Local Government Reform Act 2014 for the local electoral areas situated in a municipal district of the county, collectively comprise the council membership for that municipal district for the purpose of the performance in that collective capacity of functions of the county council in accordance with Section 131A and, in respect of each municipal district, collectively shall be known as the municipal district members.

**65.** In the case of each municipal district, the municipal district members shall elect a Cathaoirleach and Leas-Cathaoirleach at its Annual Meeting in accordance with Part 5 and Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2001.

**66.** The quorum for a municipal district meeting shall be one quarter of the total number of members plus one. When one quarter of such total number is not a whole number, the quorum is the next highest whole number plus one.

**67.** All matters specific to a municipal district shall, in the first instance, be brought to the attention of the appropriate municipal district for consideration and report.

## **Committees – General**

- 68.** The Council may appoint a Special Committee for a specific purpose. When appointing such a Committee it shall at the same time determine the number and names of members to constitute such Committee and shall also fix the quorum which shall not be less than three. The term of office of a Special Committee shall be for such period as the Council may determine when appointing the Committee.
- 69.** Every Special Committee at its first meeting shall appoint a Chairperson from its members and, where practical, fix the day and the hour of future meetings.
- 70.** In the election of Committees, candidates shall be proposed and seconded and if the number so proposed and seconded does not exceed the number of vacancies, those proposed and seconded shall be declared elected. Should the number of those proposed and seconded exceed the number of vacancies a vote shall be taken, and the procedures shall be as follows:

In the absence of agreement the provisions of paragraph 18 of Sch. 10, and the requirements of any other enactment will apply to appointments to committees.

### **71. Outside Bodies**

- (a) Members appointed by the Council to bodies set out in Art 18 (3) of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2001 and any other outside bodies or committee of the Council shall cease to be members of the body or committee on the “ordinary day of retirement” of the Members, as set out in Section 17 of the Local Government Act 2001.

Where a Member holds a directorship on the body to which he/she is appointed by the Council, such Member will formally resign from the body as a Director and representative of the Council on the “ordinary day of retirement”.

- (b) Whenever a vacancy occurs in the membership of any Committee of the Council, by reason of the death, resignation or disqualification of a member, such vacancy shall be filled as soon as circumstances permit, by the Council after due notice.

- 72.** In a Committee, a motion or amendment may be proposed without a seconder, and a member may speak more than once to any question, but otherwise the Rules of Order of the Council, so far as they are conveniently applicable, shall govern all proceedings of Committees, and the member in the Chair at any meeting of a Committee shall determine questions of order.

- 73.** Every Committee in the whole of its proceedings shall be governed by the Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Council affecting such Committee.
- 74.** A copy of every Report of a Committee to be submitted to the Council shall, before the submission thereof, be transmitted to every member of the Council at least three days before Council Meetings, save in cases of urgency when reading of the Report to Council shall suffice.
- 75.** Save for meetings of the Corporate Policy Group and such other Committees as the local authority may specify from time to time, representatives of the media and the public may be present at meetings of Committees of the Council. When confidential matters are under discussion Committees may decide to exclude such representatives from the meeting or the relevant portion of the meeting.
- 76.** The Meetings Administrator shall summon a meeting of any Committee at the request of the Cathaoirleach of the Committee, or any three of its members, or whenever the Meetings Administrator deems it necessary in special circumstances that such Committee shall meet.
- 77.** The Cathaoirleach of the Council and the Leas Cathaoirleach shall be ex-officio a member of every Committee and every Sub-Committee except those where membership is fixed by Statute.
- 78.** In the absence of the Cathaoirleach and Leas Cathaoirleach of a Committee, the Chair shall be taken by any Council member of the Committee agreed at the meeting.
- 79.** The Chair of each Committee shall be responsible to the Council for the general management of the business entrusted to such Committee.
- 80.** The Council may resolve itself into a Committee of the whole Council for the transaction of business to be specified in the Resolution.
- 81.** The recommendations of the Committees of the Council shall not become binding, except where otherwise provided in the Standing Orders, until approved by the Council, unless the Council specifically empowers these Committees to deal (without further reference to it) with certain matters, subject to the appropriate legal provisions.

## **Suspension of Standing Orders**

- 82.** Subject to the provisions and requirements of the Act, or of any other enactment, any Standing Order, except Nos. 18, 20, 46 to 49 [and 22 to 44 if so decided by Council] may at any time be suspended on a motion proposed without notice for the purpose of enabling any specific business defined in the suspensory motion to be considered and dealt with by the Council, subject to the requirement that at least two-thirds of the members present vote in favour.

## **Casual Vacancy**

- 83.** A casual vacancy shall be filled in accordance with Section 19 of the Local Government Act 2001.

Where the casual vacancy arises from the retirement of a member who was a non-party candidate at his/her election to the Council the vacancy shall be filled as follows:

- a. Where the retiring member nominates his/her successor such person so nominated shall be co-opted.
- b. Where the retiring member does not nominate his/her successor, the vacancy shall be filled by the co-option of a person nominated by other members of the Council who were non-party candidates at their election to the Council”.

## **Miscellaneous**

- 84.** A member or members appointed to outside bodies and boards may from time to time submit reports to the Council on matters arising in such bodies or boards which have relevance to the Council and shall, in any event, do so in accordance with the requirements of Section 141, Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by Section 53 (1) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014. (Annually).

Where a member of an elected council attends a conference, seminar or other meeting or event held by virtue of an authorisation under Section 142 (5) as substituted by Section 53 (c) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, he or she shall, within 15 working days of such attendance, submit to the Cathaoirleach a written report, which shall indicate the nature of the meeting and contain a summary of the proceedings.

The Cathaoirleach shall submit the report to the next ordinary meeting of the local authority. The report shall be available free of charge by the local authority to any member of the public who so requests – for that purpose, the report may be made available by the Council on its website.

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