




Takeaway

**Quick Health
Check**

Parish Councils




Dopey Parish Council



Meeting Mon, 9 June 2025 @7

Apologies

- 1) Minutes of meeting
 - 2) Changes to declarations of interests
 - 3) Play area checks
 - 4) Planning Matters
 - 5) Matters Arising
 - 6) Clerks Update
 - 7) Finance
 - 8) Councillor Reports
 - 9) Confidential items
- 

- Venue
- What's the meeting
- Who issued the agenda
- When was the agenda issued
- Not enough info for MOPs to know what is to be discussed
-
-
-
-

 ! Matters arising !

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**Carry out a quick health check on a sample Council
'meeting' process – fill out the first column of the
checklist below before, reading on.**

HEALTH CHECK

Why not give your meeting process a health check

MEETINGS	✓ x	
Notice of meeting		
Clear days' notice achieved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Details of meeting date/time/venue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Displayed (notices/website etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Authenticated by issuer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Summons/Agenda		
Summons on communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business specified clearly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Authenticated by issuer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reports attached	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sent to members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accessibility		
Agenda, reports & papers on www	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Venue accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Meeting		
Quorum met	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chair in place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SOs & FRs for reference	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Press/public papers available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Read on to find out how to improve the Council's
compliance against legislation.**

 **After reading the guidance document return to this checklist and
go down the second column of boxes and add a ✓ where you have
improved your documents.**

Councillors, you are summoned to attend Example Parish Council Full Council Meeting details of items to consider, date, time and place are on the authenticated agenda. If you are unable to attend, please could you submit an apology to the Clerk.

EXAMPLE PARISH COUNCIL

Meeting arrangements: Full Council Meeting

Date and time: Thursday, 12 September YYYY, 7.00 pm start

Venue: The Community Centre, Long Lane, Town, YY1 2XX

AGENDA

1. Apologies

2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation Considerations

Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any interest in respect of any matters contained or brought up at any point in this meeting, in accordance with the current Code of Conduct. Council will consider dispensation requests.

3. Minutes of Council Meetings

Approve the signing as a correct record, Full Council of 15 Month YYYY

4. Public Participation

Matters brought to the Parish Council by residents. The Chair may limit a member of the public to 3 minutes of speaking in order to ensure the smooth running of the meeting. Overall this section will typically be limited to 20 minutes although the Chair may, at their discretion, extend this.

5. Statutory Business

5.1 Co-option – consider the applications received for co-option to the Council and resolve to co-opt to the Council vacancies

5.2 Planning - Consider reports, approve responses and/or ratify responses made to meet deadlines under delegated powers

6. Financial Items

6.1 Approve expenditures for this month from the circulated expenditure list

6.2 Receive circulated reports (income, bank reconciliation, budgets)

6.3 *Finance item examples – review a system or replacement bank signatory*

7. Replacement wayside seat – see report for full details

or, insert the reasons, costings for a replacement seat at the crossroads of Long Land and Wide Avenue, resolve to order at £**** and have fitted.

8. Policy Review: Policy title here – to review this policy, make any amendments and agree its implementation and publication on the website.

9. Matters for information

Notify the Chair prior to the meeting starts of any item to be brought up under this section. Only items of information, referral to another authority, or matters offered for consideration at a future meeting can be raised. No legal decisions can be taken.

My Authentication

CLERK

Published: 05/MM/YYYY

Full Council meetings YYYY - ** October, ** November. YYYY – ** January, ** February, ** March

Health Check – reference material

CALLING A MEETING	Explanation and legal framework
<p>Legal calling & Public Notice <i>Often called NOTICE</i></p>	<p>Covered in the Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, Part II Parish Councils paras 7 to 13¹. Section 10 covers the necessities for a legal meeting – the Notice is at 10 2 (a):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear days' notice – minimum three clear days but seven is better, notice <u>does not</u> include the day of issue, the day of the meeting, bank holidays or Sunday as first day of notice - a date of issue demonstrates. • Meeting details – must contain date, time and place of the intended meeting • Display – notice must be displayed in a public place such as at the shop window, noticeboard, website, venue etc. • Website display – Councils with a turnover <£25,000 are required to publish the summons/agenda on an accessible website, in Transparency legislation² - this is good practice for ALL Councils to do. • Authenticated/signed – by those calling the meeting so it should carry either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - normal meetings authenticated/signed by the Clerk – if also dated can demonstrate notice period - called by Councillors authenticated by the callers <u>and</u> must also contain business to be transacted <p>Tip: notice can be simply achieved with a diary list of dates/times being displayed on the noticeboard and website, all year round – this must be authenticated – so Clerk to sign/authenticate.</p>
<p>Summons – specifying business to be transacted <i>Often called AGENDA</i></p>	<p>Calling a meeting does have three distinct actions, seen at 10 2 (b) of legislation above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summons – summoning elected members to attend the meeting. • Specify the business – agenda needs to clearly show the business to be transacted so, one word is not enough! eg. Bench – it also needs details such as <i>where, when, why, how, cost, or a report</i>. • Authenticated/signed – by those calling the meeting (see above, Clerk or calling Councillors). • Sent to every member of the Council <i>by appropriate method</i>. Sent can mean leaving/posting at members address OR by electronic methods as updated by the recent legislation (see below). <p>Tip: For some Councils, the three actions of the calling a meeting process may be all on one document encompassing the Notice, Summons & Agenda – see example agenda</p>

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/schedule/12>

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/388541/Transparency_Code_for_Smaller_Authorities.pdf

Health Check – reference material

<p>Electronically served summons/agenda</p> <p><i>Often referred to as sending out Agenda via email</i></p>	<p>Local Government (Electronic Communications) (England) Order 2015, SI 2015/5³</p> <p>This legislation allows summons to be served electronically. It insists on them being authenticated and <u>can only</u> be served this way if consent to it being transmitted electronically is given (eg. Cllr must give their permission).</p> <p>Tip: make a pro-forma for members to sign when they join the council as permission for Council's preferred method, keep on file.</p>
<p>Agenda accessibility</p>	<p>Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960⁴ states that the meetings of the Council (and its committees') must be open to the public (including press) under s.1 (1). It goes on to say that the papers for the meeting shall be made available to the press - If members of the public or press attend meetings, they should have access to the agenda.</p> <p>Tip: Clerk can provide photocopies of the agenda pack to the meeting for attending public/press.</p>
<p>Publishing associated meeting papers and accessibility</p>	<p>The Transparency Act⁵ at part 2, 10g discusses the need to publish associated meeting papers. This can be done on the website where the agenda is published, in advance and containing the papers eg. items such as an expenditure list; a report about an agenda item; other reports.</p> <p>As good practice, these should all be published along with the agenda and made available at the meeting for members of the public/press.</p> <p>The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 gives new encouragement to publish background papers for a meeting⁶ defined at section 6 and described in the guidance⁷ at Part 4.</p> <p>Tip: Clerk can take some photocopies of the agenda pack to the meeting for attending public/press.</p>

³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/5/made>

⁴ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Eliz2/8-9/67/contents>

⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/388541/Transparency_Code_for_Smaller_Authorities.pdf

⁶ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/2095/contents/made> and its guide:

⁷ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/343182/140812_Openness_Guide.pdf

Health Check – reference material

<p>Accessibility of meeting room for filming or recording</p>	<p>The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014⁸ allow the public to film, record, and photograph public meetings of local councils.</p> <p>Has Council considered a designated or separate area in the meeting venue to accommodate:</p> <p>(i) members of the public who are present at the meeting and do not wish to participate in the meeting but who object to being filmed, recorded, photographed or otherwise reported about and</p> <p>(ii) children and vulnerable adults where consent is not given by the relevant responsible adult for them to be filmed, recorded, photographed or otherwise reported about.</p> <p>Tip: Council adopt a helpful policy which could be given to members of the public/put on the chairs.</p>
<p>Accessibility of meeting room for disabled persons</p>	<p>Local councils should also consider the needs of disabled persons in relation to their access to and participation in meetings as detailed in the Equality Act 2010⁹.</p> <p>Councils will need to make reasonable adjustments which may include making physical alterations to premises used for meetings, changing the premises used for meetings if it disadvantages disabled persons (eg. wheelchair user, a person with a hearing impairment) or buying equipment to aid hearing for example.</p> <p>Further guidance on a council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 is contained in NALC Legal August 2023, formerly Topic Note 78 (The Equality Act 2010).</p>
<p>Website accessibility legislation</p>	<p>Parish & Town Council websites must adhere to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA standard but this is not all.</p> <p>The documents Council puts on to its compliant website also need to be as compliant as they can be. A professional website provider can advice or you can research further but basically:</p> <p>Follow WCAG Guidelines, Provide Text Alternatives, Provide Clear Navigation, Colour Contrast and Text Size, Responsive Design, Regular Audits. See some examples attached.</p>

⁸ [The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014](#)

⁹ [Equality Act 2010](#)

Health Check – reference material

MEETING PROCEEDINGS	Items to check																																																
Quorum at the meeting	<p>Covered in the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, Part II Parish Councils para 7 to 13¹⁰ At section 12 it states <u>no business will be transacted</u> if the Quorum of the Council is not met or subsequently falls below quorum during the meeting eg. a Councillor leaving the meeting.</p> <p>The Quorum of a Council is: one third of the Councils total number of seats ie. this is not how many Cllrs you presently have in seats, but the number of Cllrs Council should have.</p>	<p>If your prescribed number is not divisible by three, it must be rounded up. Meeting quorum cannot be less than 3 members.</p> <table><tr><th>Councillors</th><th>Quorum</th><th></th><th>Councillors</th><th>Quorum</th></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>3</td><td></td><td>13</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>3</td><td></td><td>14</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>3</td><td></td><td>15</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>8</td><td>3</td><td></td><td>16</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>3</td><td></td><td>17</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>10</td><td>4</td><td></td><td>18</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>4</td><td></td><td>19</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>12</td><td>4</td><td></td><td>20</td><td>7</td></tr></table>			Councillors	Quorum		Councillors	Quorum	5	3		13	5	6	3		14	5	7	3		15	5	8	3		16	6	9	3		17	6	10	4		18	6	11	4		19	7	12	4		20	7
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Chair /Chairing the meeting	<p>Covered in the Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, Part II Parish Councils paras 7 to 13¹¹ At section 11 – a Council must have a chair presiding, whether it is the Chair, the Vice Chair in their absence or a chair elected for that meeting from attending members.</p>																																																
Standing Orders & Financial Regulations	<p>Standing Orders - Essential for regulating the conduct of council meetings, ensuring orderly and efficient governance. They include mandatory legal requirements and optional guidelines that councils can adopt or modify to suit their specific needs. By adhering to these standing orders, councils can ensure transparency, accountability, and consistency in their operations.</p> <p>Financial Regulations - Ensures proper management and oversight of financial activities. These regulations provide a framework for financial governance, helping councils maintain transparency, accountability, and efficiency in their financial operations. They are crucial for safeguarding public funds and promoting good governance practices.</p>																																																

¹⁰ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/70/schedule/12>

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