



# PAPER B – STANDING ORDERS

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## POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

## PAPER A

13 MAY 2025

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The purpose of this Report is to recommend Members agree the amendments to the Standing Orders and refer them to Town Council for adoption at the Annual Meeting.

### 1) Background

- a) It is best practice to review the Standing Orders on an annual basis. Amendments to the Standing Orders have already been recommended for adoption at the Annual Meeting to be held on Monday 19 May.
- b) At the Town Council meeting of 14 April 2025, the following motion was moved by Cllr Ian Bond:

*Council notes that:*

*- the NALC model standing orders for town and parish councils, from which VTC's orders are derived, contain no provision enabling a scheduled council meeting to be cancelled;*

*- some principal councils do have such provisions, based on an interpretation of section 101 of the 1972 local government act (as yet untested in law) that it allows power to cancel a scheduled meeting to be delegated, usually to the lead member and/or lead officer, generally following consultation with other members, in certain limited circumstances - these commonly being no business (no decisions to take, not just a 'light agenda') or an emergency preventing the venue being used to hold the meeting.*

*Council therefore notes that, currently, no-one within VTC has delegated power to cancel any scheduled meeting, but resolves that having such a provision would be sensible, to avoid situations where meetings are held with no business to transact, and to cater for unforeseen emergency situations.*

*Council therefore resolves to request its Policy & Resources Committee to bring forward to a meeting of the incoming council a proposed amendment to its Standing Orders, which would enable scheduled meetings of the council or its committees to be cancelled, in the limited circumstances described above, delegated to the decision of both the town clerk and mayor (or committee chair as appropriate), following consultation with the relevant other members.*

At the Town Council meeting held on 14 April 2025, it was proposed by Councillor Ian Bond, seconded by Councillor Mark Jefferies, and unanimously resolved to:

*Request its Policy & Resources Committee to bring forward to a meeting of the incoming council a proposed amendment to its Standing Orders, which would enable scheduled meetings of the council or its committees to be cancelled, in the limited circumstances described above, delegated to the decision of both the*

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*town clerk and mayor (or committee chair as appropriate), following consultation with the relevant other members.*

## **2) Proposal**

Cllr Ian Bond has suggested the following:

To insert new subsections to Standing Order 3, as follows:

"e) Once notice of a meeting has been issued, it may not be cancelled except in the event of an emergency"

"f) A scheduled meeting of the council may be cancelled by the clerk, with agreement from the Mayor after consultation with all members, prior to notice having been given in the event of there being no business to transact (no motions submitted or reports requiring decision), or at any time when an emergency makes holding the meeting impossible or particularly difficult. A scheduled committee or sub-committee meeting may be cancelled, in the same circumstances, by the clerk with agreement from its chair after consultation with its members. The time or date of a meeting may be rescheduled to an alternative within seven days of that scheduled, prior to notice having been issued, using the same procedure without the requirement for there to be no business or an emergency.

## **3) Recommendation**

It is recommended that members consider the proposed wording from Cllr Ian Bond and refer any agreed wording to the Town Council for adoption.