

STALBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL

Clerk: T Watson
TheHub@Stalbridge,
Station Road, Stalbridge, Sturminster Newton, Dorset, DT10 2RG.
Tel 01963 364276.
Email: clerk@stalbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk

Town Council Members Crib Sheet

General

- On the Councillors information page on the TC web site please read and use for future reference the documents listed under 'Members Information' and 'Important documents'. (password provided) If you have any questions or queries please contact the Clerk.
- Please only use your title of Councillor in relation to council business
- Members are most strongly encouraged not to post subjects relating or referring to the Town Council on social media (ref. Social media policy)
- All e-mail communication between members should be made via the TC office.
- In between meetings you are most welcome to pop into the office. Please call in advance to check I am here, my working hours are on the home page of the TC web site.

Meetings attendance

- Full Council meetings are held once a month at 7 / 7.30pm, depending if they are preceded by a planning meeting.
- Planning meetings are held at 7pm before full council meetings and in the interim 2 weeks. They only happen if there are planning applications upon which the Town Council have been consulted.
- Occasionally Extraordinary meetings will be convened by the Chairman
- Please make an advance note of all the meeting dates for the year.
- You have a duty to attend meetings when summoned to do so. Non-attendance of meetings for six consecutive months results in forfeiture of office, unless the council approved your reason for absence before the end of the six month period.
- If you are unable to attend a meeting you must contact the Clerk with an apology and explanation. (Ref. Good councillors guide for adequate reasons for non-attendance). The Council may resolve to approve the reason for your non-attendance.

Agendas for meetings

- Putting the Agenda together is the Clerk's responsibility. The Agenda is the list of items (motions/ proposals) to be covered during a meeting. It identifies the "business to be transacted" and forms part of the summons.
- Agenda items (motions / proposals) may be of a statutory or management nature. i.e. to adopt a policy. You may ask the Clerk to add items to the Agenda if you feel a relevant subject should be discussed.
- A motion/ proposal must relate to the council's statutory functions, powers and obligations or an issue which specifically affects the council's area or its residents. (Ref. powers & services section on the councillor information page)
- An Agenda item should make it very clear what the council is being expected to do and be precise about the subject under discussion. E.g., an Agenda item saying "footpaths" gives you no idea what to expect. It is more helpful to know that your task at the meeting is: To receive a report from Cllr Gorie on the condition of footpaths in the Town and to agree action in response to proposals for repairs (copy of report attached).
- At the bottom of the minutes of each meeting there is a notice period for members to deliver proposals to the Clerk for inclusion on the agenda of the meeting

Meeting preparation

- Summons for the meetings are posted on the TC web site on the meeting and agendas drop at the top of the home page. These will be posted here on the Wednesday preceding each meeting

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- On the agenda there is one [blue link to view the minutes of the previous meeting](#) and another [blue link meetings papers](#) on the web site (correspondence, annex, reports, images or links) .
- Please ensure that you have read all the papers prior to the meeting and should you have any questions please contact the office prior to the meeting.

At Meetings

- The chairman is in charge of the meeting, they have a duty to ensure that council meetings run smoothly and that all business is properly considered and all councillors who wish to speak can do so.
- The clerk supports the council as it discusses business.
- As a rule, meetings should not last more than two hours

Public at meetings

- Meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public's exclusion from part or all of a meeting shall be by a resolution which shall give reasons for the public's exclusion.
- While council meetings are an opportunity to observe the council at work, they are not the place for members of the public to address councillors. People who have been invited to make a submission may speak when directed, but there should be no debate between the public and councillors at council meetings.

Conduct at meetings

- Please keep contributions strictly in relation to the agenda item and short and to the point.
- Always work through the Chairman, conversations across the floor between members are not allowed.
- Each member should only speak once on the matter although the proposer may answer points raised in the debate but not make new points.
- Speak one at a time as directed by the Chairman, please do not interrupt or have conversations when others are speaking.

Making decisions

- All Council decisions are made at council meetings or through them. They are either made at the meeting or under delegated authority to others.
- Council decisions are made by a majority of the councillors present at the meeting voting in favour, (show of hands) providing a quorum is present. (STC quorum is 3) If there is a tied vote the Chairman has a second casting vote.
- If you have no view on a proposal, or cannot decide, you can abstain, but you shouldn't do this too frequently.
- Normally voters' names are not minuted but if necessary, you can ask for names to be recorded.
- Decisions made by the Council are called resolutions and are recorded in the minutes E.g. s, "It was resolved that the council will contribute £2000 to the community bus scheme."
- Decisions that have been taken (resolutions) need to be implemented. The Clerk writes the minutes as a legal record of what was decided at the meeting and it is therefore important that they are accurate. The minutes of the last meeting are confirmed and signed at the start of the next meeting.