

**NEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**STANDING ORDERS**

**1. Meetings**

- (a) Ordinary meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be held in the months of January, February, March, April, May, June, August, September, October, November, and December. Special Meetings may be called at any time on the instructions of the Chairperson of the community council; or on the request of not less than one-half of the total number of COMMUNITY COUNCIL members; or the receipt of a common written request (petition), signed by at least 20 persons, resident within the COMMUNITY COUNCIL area, to convene a special meeting for a particular matter or matters to be debated, it shall call such a meeting. A special meeting shall be held within 14 days of the receipt of the request made to the Secretary of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL. Annual general meetings are held annually.
- (b) The notice of ordinary and annual general meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, featuring the date, time and venue, shall be provided to each COMMUNITY COUNCIL member and the local authority's named official by the Secretary of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, at least 10 days before the date fixed for the meeting.
- (c) Dates, times and venues of regular meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be fixed at the first meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL following ordinary elections and thereafter at its annual general meeting. Special meetings shall require at least 10 days public notice, either called by the Chairperson, or on the request of not less than one-half of the total number of COMMUNITY COUNCIL members. The local authority's liaison officer of the local authority has the discretion to call a meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL.
- (d) Community Councils may also hold private meetings with no public notification, but only: in circumstances where it is not otherwise possible to arrange and advertise a public meeting according to the standard rules of the scheme; or where the objective of the meeting is purely to ratify a community council position that has previously been discussed at the preceding public session. Such meetings shall invite the opinion of all community council members present and will be minuted. The minutes will then be presented to the next public meeting.
- (e) All COMMUNITY COUNCIL members, including ex officio members shall be treated equally, and fairly and without distinction or discrimination, in relation to meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL.

## **2. Minutes**

Minutes of the proceedings of a meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be drawn up within fourteen days from the date of that meeting, distributed in accordance with paragraph 3 of the Scheme of Community Councils and shall, following their approval, be signed at the next meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL by the person presiding thereat and retained for future reference.

## **3. Quorum**

A quorum shall be one-third of the current voting membership of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, or 3 voting members, whichever is the greater.'

## **4. Order of Business**

### **(i) Ordinary Meeting**

The order of business at every ordinary meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be as follows: -

- (a) Recording of membership present and apologies received.
- (b) The minutes of the last meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be submitted for approval.
- (c) Any other item of business, which the Chairperson has directed, should be considered.
- (d) Any other competent business.
- (e) Questions from the floor.
- (f) Chairperson to declare date of next meeting and close meeting.

### **(ii) Annual General Meeting**

It will not be uncommon that the COMMUNITY COUNCIL has arranged for an ordinary meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL to begin at the close of the annual general meeting, to enable any outstanding reporting on business matters to be heard; and for COMMUNITY COUNCIL members and members of the public to have an opportunity to bring matters to the attention of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, possibly for inclusion on a future agenda.

The order of business at every annual general meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be as follows: -

- (a) Recording of membership present and apologies received.
- (b) The minutes of the last annual general meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be submitted for adoption.
- (c) Chairperson's Annual Report (and questions from the floor).
- (d) Secretary's Annual Report (and questions from the floor).

- (e) Treasurer's submission of Balance Sheet and Annual Accounts duly independently examined and certified correct (and questions from the floor).
- (f) Demit of current office bearers/election of office bearers.
- (g) Chairperson to declare date of regular community council meeting dates along with next annual general meeting and close meeting.

**(iii) Extraordinary General Meeting**

The order of business at every extraordinary general meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall be as follows: -

- (a) Recording of membership present and apologies received.
- (b) Business for debate, as described in the calling notice for the special meeting.
- (c) Chairperson to close meeting.

**5. Order of Debate**

- (a) The Chairperson shall decide all questions of order, relevancy and competency arising at meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL and her/his ruling shall be final and shall not be open to discussion. In particular, the Chairperson shall determine the order, relevancy and competency of all questions from the public in attendance at meetings of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL raised at 4, above. The Chairperson in determining the order, relevance and competency of business and questions shall have particular regard to the relevance of the issue to the community and ensure that the discussion and proceedings are conducted in such a manner that decisions are reached in a democratic manner. The Chairperson shall have the power, in the event of disorder arising at any meeting, to adjourn the COMMUNITY COUNCIL meeting to a time he/she may then, or afterwards, fix.
- (b) Every motion or amendment shall be moved and seconded.
- (c) After a mover of a motion has been called on by the Chairperson to reply, no other members shall speak to the question.
- (d) A motion or amendment once made and seconded shall not be withdrawn without the consent of the mover and seconder thereof.
- (e) A motion or amendment which is contrary to a previous decision of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall not be competent within six months of that decision.

## **6. Voting**

- (a) Voting shall be taken by a show of hands of those present and eligible to vote, with the exception that, at an annual general meeting, the election of office bearers may be held by secret ballot.
- (b) The Chairperson of a meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL shall have a casting vote as well as a deliberative vote.

## **7. Alteration of Standing Orders**

A proposal to alter these Standing Orders may be proposed to the local authority to be altered or added to at any time by the COMMUNITY COUNCIL, provided that notice of motion to that effect is given at the meeting of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL previous to that at which the motion is discussed. The local authority shall have final discretion on any proposed change.

## **8. Committees**

The COMMUNITY COUNCIL may appoint such committees as it may from time to time decide and shall determine their composition, terms of reference, duration, duties and powers.

## **9. Suspension of Standing Orders**

These Standing Orders shall not be suspended except at a meeting at which three-quarters of the total number of COMMUNITY COUNCIL members are present and then only if the mover states the object of his motion and if two-thirds of the COMMUNITY COUNCIL members present consent to such suspension.