BELVOIR PARISH COUNCIL STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL
REGULATIONS.

Last Updated; 18/5/2017  Last reviewed; 18/5/2017

1. ANNUAL MEETING

a. In an election year shall be held within 14 days of the election.
b. In a year that is not an election year shall be held on a date in May as determined by the Parish Council.

2. MEETINGS

a. At least three other ordinary meetings shall be held each year, one of which should be the precept meeting.
b. 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.
c. Members of the public are permitted to make representations during a public participation session, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda at the request of the Chairman.
d. In accordance with standing order 2(c) above, a question asked by a member of the public during a public participation session at a meeting shall not require a response or debate.
e. The Chairman may direct that a response to a question posed by a member of the public during a public participation session be referred to a Councillor for an oral response or to the Clerk for a written or oral response.
f. A person shall raise his hand when requesting to speak during a public participation session and shall address their comments to the Chairman.
g. During a public participation session, only one person is permitted to speak at a time. If more than one person wishes to speak, the Chairman shall direct the order of speaking.
h. Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting by any means is permitted.

3. CHAIRMAN

The person presiding at a meeting may exercise all the powers and duties of the Chairman in relation to the conduct of the meeting.
4. QUORUM

a. No business may be transacted at a meeting if the quorum of a meeting be less than 3.

b. If a meeting is or becomes inquorate, no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be adjourned. Any outstanding business of a meeting so adjourned shall be transacted at a following meeting.

5. VOTING

Councillors shall vote by a show of hands or, if two councillors so request, by signed ballot. If a councillor so requires, the clerk shall record the names of the councillors who voted on any question so as to show whether they voted for or against it. Such a request must be made before moving on to the next business.

Subject to a. and b. below, the Chairman may give a casting vote on any matter put to the vote and may, in any case of equality of the votes, give a casting vote whether or not he/she gave an original vote.

a. If the person presiding at the annual meeting would have ceased to be a councillor of the council but for the statutory provisions which preserve the councillorship of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman until the end of their term of office he may not give a casting vote in an election for Chairman.

b. The person presiding must give a casting vote whenever there is an equality of votes in an election for Chairman.

6. ORDER OF BUSINESS

At each Annual Parish Council Meeting the first business shall be:

a. To elect a Chairman of the Council
b. To receive the Chairman’s declaration of acceptance of office, or if not then received, to decide when it shall be received.
c. To elect a Vice-Chairman
d. In the ordinary year of election of the Council to fill any vacancies unfilled at the election by reason of insufficient nominations.
e. To decide when any declarations of acceptance of office, Register of Interests form and written undertakings to observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council which have not been received as provided by law, shall be received.
f. To review the pay and conditions of the Clerk.

At every meeting other than the Annual Parish Council Meeting the first business shall be to appoint a Chairman if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be absent and to receive such declarations of acceptance of office (if any) and undertaking to observe the Council’s Code of Conduct as are required by law to be made, or if not then received, to decide when they shall be received.
After the first business has been completed the order of business shall be as follows at the discretion of the Council:

a. To read and consider the minutes. Provided a copy has been circulated to each councillor not later than the day of issue of the summons to attend the meeting, the minutes may be taken as read.

b. After consideration to approve the signature of the minutes by the person presiding as a correct record.

c. To deal with business expressly required by statute to be done.

d. To dispose of business remaining from an earlier meeting.

e. To receive any communications as the person presiding may wish to lay before the Council.

f. To authorise the signing of orders for payment.

g. To consider resolutions and recommendations in the order in which they have been notified.

h. To conduct any other business specified in the summons.

i. Time should be allocated for members of the public, borough council and county council to speak.

7. RULES OF DEBATE

a. Motions included in an agenda shall be considered in the order that they appear on the agenda unless the order is changed at the Chairman’s direction for reasons of expediency.

b. When a councillor’s motion is under debate, no other motion shall be moved except:

   i. to amend the motion;
   ii. to proceed to the next business;
   iii. to adjourn the debate;
   iv. to put the motion to a vote;
   v. to ask a person to be silent or for them to leave the meeting;
   vii. to exclude the public and press;
   viii. to adjourn the meeting;
   ix. to suspend any standing order, except those which are mandatory.

c. In respect of standing orders above, the Chairman shall first be satisfied that the motion has been sufficiently debated before it is seconded and put to the vote. The Chairman shall call upon the mover of the motion under debate to exercise or waive his right of reply and shall put the motion to the vote after that right has been exercised or waived. The adjournment of a debate or of the meeting shall not prejudice the mover’s right of reply at the resumption.

8. CODE OF CONDUCT

All councillors shall observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 6 September 2012, a copy of which is attached to these standing orders.

No councillor shall at a meeting persistently disregard the ruling of the Chairman, wilfully obstruct business, or behave offensively, improperly or in such a manner as to bring the Council into disrepute.
If, in the opinion of the Chairman, a councillor has acted in such a manner contrary to that required, the Chairman shall express that opinion to the Council and thereafter any councillor may move that the councillor named be no longer heard or that the councillor named do leave the meeting, and the motion, if seconded shall be put forthwith and without discussion.

If such a resolution is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and he/she may adjourn the meeting.

If a councillor reasonably believes another councillor is in breach of the Code of Conduct, that councillor is under a duty to report the breach to the Monitoring Officer at MBC

9. DISORDERLY CONDUCT

a. No member of the public shall obstruct the transaction of business at a meeting or behave offensively or improperly.

b. If, in the opinion of the Chairman, there has been a breach of standing order 9 (a) above, the Chairman shall express that opinion and thereafter any councillor (including the Chairman) may move that the person be silenced or excluded from the meeting, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put forth with and without discussion.

c. If a resolution made in accordance with standing order 9(b) above, is disobeyed, the Chairman may take such further steps as may reasonably be necessary to enforce it and he/she may adjourn the meeting.

10. PAYMENTS

Orders for the payment of money shall be authorised by resolution of the Council and signed by two councillors.

11. INTERESTS

If a councillor has a personal interest as defined by the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council, then he shall declare such an interest as soon as it becomes apparent, disclosing the existence and nature of that interest as required.

If a councillor who has declared a personal interest then considers the interest to be prejudicial, he must withdraw from the room during consideration of the item to which the interest relates.

The clerk may be required to compile and hold a register of Councillors’ Interests, or a copy thereof, in accordance with agreement reached with the Monitoring Officer of the Responsible Authority.

12. INFORMATION

All minutes kept by the Council and by any committee shall be open to inspection by any councillor of the Council.

After the minutes have been agreed and signed they will be displayed to the public.
A summons and agenda for the next agreed meeting will also be displayed publically at least three days before the meeting.

The public and press shall be admitted to all meetings of the Council which may, however, temporarily exclude the public and press by means of the following resolution:

“That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw.”

A copy of the standing orders will be issued to all Council members. The standing orders will be reviewed at each Annual Parish Council meeting.

13. CONTRACTS

Where it is intended to enter into a contract for materials, or services, exceeding £300.00, such business shall be put out to tender to at least two companies.

The notices shall state the general requirements of the intended contract and state the name and address of the Parish Clerk to whom the tenders are to be addressed together with the last date by which the tenders should be received.

Tenders shall be opened by the Parish Clerk and their content shall be reported to the Council.

The Council is not obliged to accept the lowest offer.

14. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS

a. The Chairman of the Council may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council at any time.

b. If the Chairman of the Council does not or refuses to call an extraordinary meeting of the Council within 7 days of having been requested to do so by two councillors, those two councillors may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Council. The statutory public notice giving the time, venue and agenda for such a meeting must be signed by the two councillors.

15. MATTERS AFFECTING THE CLERK

a. The Council will draft and sign an employment Contract with the Clerk. This will be reviewed and renewed every two years.

b. If a meeting considers any matter personal to the Clerk, it shall not be considered until the Council has decided whether or not the press and public shall be excluded.

c. The Chairman or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman, shall, upon a resolution, conduct a review of the performance and/or appraisal of the Clerk and shall keep a written record of it. The review and/or appraisal shall be reported back and shall be subject to approval by resolution.
d. Subject to the Council’s policy regarding the handling of grievance matters, the Clerk shall contact the Chairman or in his absence, the Vice-Chairman in respect of an informal or formal grievance matter, and this matter shall be reported back and progressed by resolution.

16 PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

a. All internal communication related to PC matters should be copied to all councillors and the Clerk. It is appreciated that sometimes the Clerk and Chairman need to communicate directly with each other to facilitate the work of the council but this should be kept to a minimum. As Planning Applications are now received electronically they should be forwarded to all councillors and if any councillor feels an application is contentious then a brief meeting may be convened to allow discussion if a response is required to MBC before the next scheduled Parish Council meeting. Any comments being made are to be reported to the next PC meeting for ratification.

b. With regard to communication with external bodies. This should be actioned by the clerk or another member of the parish council if that councillor has been given permission by the PC to carry out that action/deal with the issue.