



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
& PETERBOROUGH  
FIRE AUTHORITY**

*Working together to improve community safety*

## STANDING ORDERS AS TO MEETINGS

### Version History

Version	Date	Comments
1	October 2006	
2	July 2007	Terminology change.
3	June 2009	Change of Committee structure.
4	October 2009	Quorum changes.
5	October 2012	Change in Committee structure and interests of Members in contracts another matters.
6	September 2015	
7	November 2021	
8	December 2024	Annual review (deferred from June 2024).
9	December 2025	Annual review (deferred from June 2025). Change in Committee titles at Paragraphs 3.1, 4.4 and 10.2 and removal of Appeals (Pensions) Committee (latter approved by Fire Authority in June 2025).

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## **1. ELECTION OF CHAIR**

- 1.1 At its annual meeting, before proceeding to any other business, the Authority shall elect a Chair from Cambridgeshire County Council representatives and Vice-Chair from Peterborough City Council representatives for the ensuing year.
- 1.2 The Chair shall remain in office until a successor is elected.
- 1.3 At the annual meeting, the Authority shall make appointments to Committees and appoint Chairs and Vice-Chairs to its Committees and outside bodies. These Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs shall hold office until the next annual meeting of the Fire Authority.
- 1.4 In the absence from a meeting of the Chair and, where appointed, a Vice-Chair of the Authority, a Chair for that meeting only shall be appointed from among those Members present.

## **2. CHAIR OF MEETING**

- 2.1 Any power or duty of the Chair in relation to the conduct of a meeting may be exercised by the person presiding at the meeting.

## **3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE AUTHORITY AND ITS COMMITTEES**

- 3.1 The Authority's Committees are;
  - Policy and Resources Committee
  - Overview and Scrutiny Committee (with a Hearings Panel sub-Committee)
  - Performance Review Committee
  - Appointments Committee
  - Senior and Statutory Officer Performance Committee
  - Senior and Statutory Officer Appeals Committee
- 3.2 The membership of the Authority reflects the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, with specific appointments and replacements being made by each constituent authority, within the overall allocation of seats to political groups except insofar as individual groups waive their rights.
- 3.3 The membership of the Authority's Committees will comply with the requirements of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and reflect the overall political proportionality of the Fire Authority, except for those Committees where the requirement to reflect political proportionality has been waived by a unanimous vote of the Fire Authority. Members of the Authority's Committees must also be Members of the Fire Authority.

- 3.4 Any permanent changes in a Committee's membership must be notified by the Group Leader or the majority of their group to the Democratic Services Manager no later than 12 noon the working day before the relevant meeting. Democratic Services will ensure that all appointments to Committees are reported to the next meeting of the Fire Authority.

#### **4. QUORUM**

- 4.1 If during a meeting of the Authority or its Committees, the Chair declares, after counting the number of Members present, that there is not a quorum present, the meeting shall stand adjourned.
- 4.2 The consideration of any business not transacted shall be adjourned to a time fixed by the Chair at the time the meeting is adjourned, or, if a time is not fixed, to the next ordinary meeting of the Authority or Committee as the case may be.
- 4.3 The quorum of the Authority shall be one-third of the whole membership of the Authority (for 17 Members, the quorum is six) provided that there is at least one Member from each of the constituent authorities present.
- 4.4 The quorum for the Committees of the Fire Authority shall be;

Policy and Resources Committee	Three Members
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Three Members
Hearings Panel of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Three Members
Performance Review Committee	Three Members
Appointments Committee	Three Members
Senior and Statutory Officer Performance Committee	Three Members
Senior and Statutory Officer Appeals Committee	Three Members

#### **5. MINUTES**

- 5.1 The Chair shall put the question that the minutes of the last meeting be approved as a correct record.
- 5.2 No discussion shall take place upon the minutes except upon their accuracy and any question of their accuracy shall be raised by motion. If no such question is raised, or if it is raised, then as soon as it has been disposed of, the Chair shall sign the minutes.
- 5.3 Minutes of meetings of the Authority and its Committees shall be signed at the next ordinary meeting of that body.

## **6. VOTING**

- 6.1 The mode of voting at all meetings shall be by show of hands except as provided in Standing Order 7. Immediately after a vote is taken at any meeting, any Member present may on request have recorded in the minutes whether they cast their vote for or against the question or whether they abstained from voting.
- 6.2 If the number of Members present, equivalent to the quorum, demand a recorded vote, then each Member will be asked to indicate whether their vote is in favour of or against the motion or whether they abstain. The way in which each Member present voted is then recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- 6.3 In the event of a tied vote, the Chair shall have a casting vote.

## **7. VOTING ON APPOINTMENTS**

- 7.1 The mode of voting for all appointments made by the Authority shall be determined by the Chair of the meeting, usually by show of hands. A secret ballot must only be used exceptionally.
- 7.2 Where more than two persons are nominated for any appointment and of the votes given there is not a majority in favour of one of them, the name of the person having the least number of votes shall be struck off the list and a fresh vote shall be taken, and so on until a majority of votes is given in favour of one person.
- 7.3 In the event of a tied vote at any stage of the process, the Chair shall have a casting vote.

## **8. RECORD OF ATTENDANCES**

- 8.1 Every Member of the Authority attending a meeting of the Authority or any of its Committees shall have their attendance recorded in the minutes.
- 8.2 Where a Member fails to attend two consecutive meetings, for whatever reason, the Monitoring Officer will initiate discussions with the Member concerned and, if appropriate, their political Group Leader. The Monitoring Officer may, in consultation with the Group Leader, write to the Chief Executive of the Member's Unitary Authority to seek removal of the Member and the appointment of an alternative Member should non-attendance continue.

## **9. ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEETINGS**

- 9.1 Meetings of the Authority shall be held on dates and at times and venues determined in advance and agreed by the Authority. Any variation, addition or deletion to the agreed programme must be approved by the Chair in consultation with the Vice-Chair and opposition Group Leaders, or by the Chair only in cases of urgency.

- 9.2 The Chair of the Authority may call a special meeting of the Authority at any time. A special meeting shall also be called within 28 days from the receipt of a requisition signed by a quarter of the Members of the Authority, delivered in writing to the Monitoring Officer.
- 9.3 A summons to the special meeting shall set out the business to be transacted and no business other than that set out in the summons shall be considered at that meeting.
- 9.4 A copy of the agenda and reports for any meeting of the Authority or its Committees shall be published and sent to every Member at least five clear days before the meeting at which the reports are to be considered.
- 9.5 Meetings of Committees shall be held on dates and at times and venues determined in advance and agreed by the Committee. Any variation, additions or deletions to the original programme must be approved by the Chair of the Committee.

## **10. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES**

- 10.1 For the Performance Review Committee, Senior and Statutory Officer Performance Committee and the Senior and Statutory Officer Appeals Committee the Authority will appoint up to three named substitutes. There shall be no substitute members allowed for Policy and Resources Committee or Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 10.2 Substitute Members, when substituting for an ordinary Member of the Committee, will have all the powers and duties of any ordinary Member of the Committee but will not be able to exercise any special powers or duties exercisable by the person they are substituting.
- 10.3 Substitute Members may attend meetings in that capacity only;
  - 10.3.1 to take the place of the ordinary Member for whom they are the designated substitute,
  - 10.3.2 after notifying the Democratic Services Officer of the intended substitution before the start of the meeting.
- 10.4 In the event of the ordinary Member of the Committee being present at the start of the meeting, the ordinary Member may advise that the substitution shall not take effect. The membership of the Committee shall be as constituted at the start of the meeting and substitution will not be permitted during the course of the meeting.
- 10.5 Substitute Members are eligible for travelling and subsistence allowances as if they were appointed Members of that Committee.

## **11. DISCLOSURE OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE AUTHORITY AND ITS COMMITTEES**

- 11.1 Agenda, reports and other documents and proceedings of the Authority and any of its Committees shall only be treated as confidential if clearly so marked or specified. Documents which are so marked shall not be disclosed other than to those Members who are entitled to them.
- 11.2 The Monitoring Officer shall, in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, state clearly on the document the reason for the confidentiality.

## **12. INSPECTION OF DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED BY THE AUTHORITY**

- 12.1 Subject to paragraphs 12.3 and 12.4 below a Member of either of the two constituent authorities who, on application to the Monitoring Officer, is able to establish a need to know, may inspect any document which has been considered by the Authority and/or any of its Committees and, if copies are available, shall on request be supplied with a copy of such document.
- 12.2 Any Members aggrieved by a refusal to allow the inspection of any document under paragraph 12.1 above may require the Monitoring Officer to refer their application to the Authority whose decision shall be final.
- 12.3 The Monitoring Officer may decline to allow inspection of any document which in their opinion is or, in the event of legal proceedings, would be protected by privilege arising from the relationship of solicitor and client.
- 12.4 The Monitoring Officer may decline to allow inspection of any document or other information relating to an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed that it be withheld.
- 12.5 The provisions on the inspection of documents relating to items to be considered by the Authority and any of its Committees are set out in Section 100F of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 12.6 Where the Hearing Panel of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is considering an allegation against a Member, there will be no public right of access to the meetings or documents.
- 12.7 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is required to produce a written summary of its consideration of those matters, which is to be made available to the public.
- 12.8 Otherwise, the proceedings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Hearing Panel are to be open to the public in a manner similar to that in which other proceedings of local authorities are made open (see Part 5A of the Local Government Act 1972).



### **13. ITEMS FOR THE AUTHORITY**

- 13.1 The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer, Section 151/Chief Financial Officer or Monitoring Officer may place on the agenda paper of the Authority notice of all business which, in their opinion, requires its attention.
- 13.2 Any Member of the Authority may submit an item of business for inclusion on the agenda of the Authority and the item shall be included provided that;
  - 13.2.1 its inclusion on the agenda has the support of the Chair of the Authority,
  - 13.2.2 the item is not covered by any other item to be included on the agenda,
  - 13.2.3 at least ten clear working days' notice of the item is given in writing to the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.

### **14. DISORDERLY CONDUCT BY MEMBERS OF THE AUTHORITY**

- 14.1 If at any meeting of the Authority, any Member, in the opinion of the Chair, persistently disregards the ruling of the Chair, or persistently behaves irregularly, improperly or offensively, or persistently wilfully obstructs the business of the meeting, the Chair or any other Member may move 'that the Member named be not further heard'. The motion, if seconded, shall be put and determined without discussion.
- 14.2 If the Member named continues their conduct after a motion under the foregoing paragraph has been carried, the Chair shall either move 'that the Member named do leave the meeting' (in which case the motion shall be put and determined without discussion) or adjourn the meeting for such period as the Chair at their direction considers expedient.
- 14.3 In the event of a general disturbance which, in the opinion of the Chair, renders the due and orderly despatch of business impossible, the Chair, in addition to any other power invested in them may, without putting the question, adjourn the meeting for such period as they consider expedient.

### **15. DISTURBANCE BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

- 15.1 If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting of the Authority or its Committees or is in contravention of Standing Order 14, the Chair shall warn them. If they continue, the Chair shall order their removal from the meeting room.
- 15.2 In case of general disturbance in any part of the meeting room open to the public, the Chair shall order that part to be cleared.

## **16. PHOTOGRAPHY AND AUDIO RECORDINGS OF MEETINGS**

- 16.1 The Authority supports the principle of transparency and encourages filming, recording and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. It also welcomes the use of social networking and micro-blogging websites (such as X and Face Book) to communicate with people about what is happening, as it happens. These arrangements will operate in accordance with a protocol agreed by the Chair of the Authority and political Group Leaders. This protocol is published on the Authority's website.

## **17. PUBLICITY REGARDING EMPLOYEES**

- 17.1 If, at a meeting of the Authority or any of its Committees any question arises which would be likely to result in the disclosure to members of the public of exempt information (relating to particular employees etc) of the categories described in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the question shall not be the subject of discussion until a motion to exclude the public has been proposed and voted upon.

## **18. INTEREST OF MEMBERS IN CONTRACTS AND OTHER MATTERS**

### **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest**

- 18.1 If a Member attends a meeting and has and is aware that he/she has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered, or being considered, at that meeting;
- 18.1.2 if the interest is not entered in the Authority's Register of Members' Interests, he/she must, subject to sub-paragraph 18.1.3 below, disclose to the meeting the fact that he/she has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in that matter. If he/she has not already done so, he/she must notify the Authority's Monitoring Officer of the interest before the end of 28 days beginning with the date of the disclosure, and
- 18.1.3 whether the interest is registered or not he/she must not – unless he/she has obtained a dispensation from the Authority's Monitoring Officer - participate, or participate further, in any discussion of the matter at the meeting or remain in the meeting room whilst the matter is being debated or participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting apart from making representations, giving evidence or answering questions, prior to the commencement of the debate on that matter.

### **Sensitive Interest**

- 18.2 Where he/she consider (and the Authority's Monitoring Officer agrees) that the nature of a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is such that disclosure of the details of the interest could lead to he/she or a person connected with he/she being subject to intimidation or violence, it is a "sensitive interest" for the purposes of the Code and the details of the sensitive interest do not need to be disclosed to a meeting, although the fact that he/she has a sensitive

interest must be disclosed.

## **19. INTEREST OF OFFICERS IN CONTRACTS**

- 19.1 If any Officer attending a meeting of the Authority or any of its Committees has a pecuniary interest in any contract or other matter before that meeting, he/she shall declare that interest and withdraw from the meeting unless the meeting determines otherwise.

## **20. ORDER OF BUSINESS AT MEETINGS OF THE AUTHORITY**

- 20.1 Except as otherwise provided by paragraph 20.2 of this Standing Order, the order of business at every meeting of the Authority shall be;
- 20.1.1 to appoint a person to preside if the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent,
- 20.1.2 to deal with any business required by statute to be done before any other business,
- 20.1.3 to approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the last meeting of the Authority,
- 20.1.4 any correspondence, communications or other business specially brought forward by direction of the Chair,
- 20.1.5 to dispose of any business remaining from the last meeting,
- 20.1.6 other business, if any, specified in the summons.
- 20.2 Business falling under items 20.1.1 to 20.1.3 inclusive shall not be displaced but subject thereto the foregoing order of business may be varied;
- 20.2.1 by the Chair at their discretion or,
- 20.2.2 by a resolution passed on a motion (which need not be in writing) duly moved and seconded, which shall be moved and put without discussion.

## **21. MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS WHICH MAY BE MOVED WITHOUT NOTICE AT MEETINGS OF THE AUTHORITY**

- 21.1 The following motions and amendments may be moved without notice;
- 21.1.2 appointment of a Chair of the meeting at which the motion is made,
- 21.1.3 motions relating to the accuracy of the minutes,
- 21.1.4 variation in the order of business specified in the summons subject to the requirements of Standing Order 20,
- 21.1.5 that leave be given to withdraw a motion,

- 21.1.6 amendments to motions,
- 21.1.7 that the Authority proceed to the next business,
- 21.1.8 that the question be now put,
- 21.1.9 that the debate be now adjourned,
- 21.1.10 that the Authority do now adjourn,
- 21.1.11 that with the consent of the Chair on the grounds of urgency, Standing Orders be suspended in accordance with Standing Order 24,
- 21.1.12 motions under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, to exclude the public,
- 21.1.13 that a Member named under Standing Order 14 be not heard further or do leave the meeting,
- 21.1.14 in connection with voting on appointments in accordance with Standing Order 7.

## **22. RULES OF DEBATE FOR MEETINGS**

### **Motions and Amendments**

- 22.1 A motion or amendment shall not be discussed unless it has been proposed and seconded.

### **Contents of Speeches**

- 22.2 Members shall direct speeches to the issue under discussion or to a personal explanation or to a point of order.

### **Amendments to Motions**

- 22.3 An amendment shall be relevant to the motion and shall be either;
  - 22.3.1 to omit words,
  - 22.3.2 to omit words and insert others or,
  - 22.3.3 to insert words,
  - 22.3.4 but such omission or insertion of words shall not have the effect of simply negating the motion before the Committee which could otherwise be achieved by voting against the motion.

### **Withdrawal of Motion**

- 22.4 A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the mover with the consent of

their seconder, which shall be signified without discussion, and no Member may speak upon it after permission for its withdrawal has been granted.

### **Ruling of Chair on Points of Order**

22.5 The ruling of the Chair on a point of order shall not be open to discussion.

### **23. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

23.1 At a meeting of the Authority and subject to the following paragraphs, questions may be asked, or statements made by any member of the public – individuals, representatives of voluntary and other external organisations, including businesses.

23.2 Questions or statements will not normally be accepted from employees of the Authority except when acting as trades union representatives or private individuals, as they have sufficient channels of communication, both internally and through their representative bodies.

23.3 Up to fifteen minutes will be allowed in total for questions/statements.

23.4 Speakers will be invited on a first come, first served basis.

23.5 Anyone wishing to speak should make a request in writing no later than 12 noon, three working days before the meeting.

23.6 Any request should be in writing either via e-mail or letter to the Democratic Services Officer and provide the following details;

23.6.1 name, address and contact details of the person making a comment or asking a question,

23.6.2 details of the request to speak; if you wish to ask a question, the full text of the question needs to be provided. If you wish to make a comment about a matter on the agenda, a list of the main points is required.

23.7 Requests to speak received after the three-day deadline may be permitted, at the discretion of the Authority Chair.

23.8 All the questions and comments should be clear, concise and relevant to the agenda of the meeting. Only one question or comment may be allowed per speaker.

23.9 Questions/statements must relate to the Authority's responsibilities and affect Cambridgeshire or Peterborough. They must also not;

23.9.1 be defamatory or improper,

23.9.2 relate to the performance or employment of Authority individuals or concern a matter in which a right of appeal or review exists,

23.9.3 concern a matter which is confidential or exempt business including individual cases

under investigation and allegations of crime or individual complaints against employees of the Authority.

- 23.10 The Chair will invite each speaker to address Members of the Authority.
- 23.11 Each Person will be able to speak for a maximum of three minutes. The Democratic Services Officer will time each speaker to ensure that he/she does not exceed three minutes. If a speaker continues for longer the Chair will ask him/her to stop. No more than three speakers will normally be permitted per subject at a meeting (subject to the Chair's discretion).
- 23.12 The Chair will deal with the question or statement or request that an appropriate Member or Officer reply orally. The Chair can decide whether the questioner should have the opportunity to seek clarification of the reply or ask one supplementary question.
- 23.13 Any questioner who attends but does not receive a response through lack of time will be sent a written reply within ten working days after the meeting.

## **24. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

- 24.1 All Standing Orders, except for those Standing Orders governed by statute, may be suspended at any meeting of the Authority and any of its Committees as regards any business at the meeting, where the Chair considers it urgent and there are at least half of the Members or a quorum, whichever is greater are present. When moving a motion to suspend a Standing Order the mover shall specify the Standing Order concerned and state the purpose for wishing to suspend it.

## **25. APPOINTMENTS AND CANVASSING OF MEMBERS**

- 25.1 Canvassing of Members of the Authority for any appointment under the Authority shall disqualify the candidate concerned for that appointment.

## **26. RELATIVES OF MEMBERS OR OFFICERS**

- 26.1 A candidate for any appointment under the Authority who knows that they are related to any Member of the Authority or senior Officers of the Authority shall, when making an application, disclose that relationship. A candidate who fails to disclose such a relationship shall be disqualified for the appointment but, if appointed prior to disclosure, shall be liable to dismissal without notice.
- 26.2 Every Member of the Authority and senior Officers of the Authority shall disclose to the Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer any relationship known to them to exist between themselves and any person whom they know is a candidate for an appointment under the Authority. The Chief Fire Officer /Chief Executive Officer shall report to the Authority any such disclosure made.

- 26.3 For the purpose of this Standing Order 'senior Officer' means any Officer whose salary grade is a level equivalent to MB1/Station Manager or above. Persons shall be deemed to be related if they are husband or wife or partner or if either of them or their spouse or partner of either of them is the son or daughter or grandson or granddaughter or brother or sister or nephew or niece of the other, or of the spouse or partner of the other.

**27. INTERPRETATION OF STANDING ORDERS**

- 27.1 The ruling of the Chair of the meeting as to the construction or application of any of these Standing Orders, or as to any proceedings of the Authority and its Committees shall not be challenged at the meeting.

**28. STANDING ORDERS TO BE GIVEN TO MEMBERS**

- 28.1 A printed copy of these Standing Orders shall be given to each Member of the Authority by the Monitoring Officer upon delivery to them of notification of the Member being first appointed to the Authority. Any subsequent revision to these Standing Orders shall be notified to each Member.