

# RULES FOR PUBLIC SESSION AND COUNCIL MEETING

## 1. Purpose

These rules clarify how Alwoodley Parish Council manages its public participation sessions and conducts formal meetings, in accordance with the NALC Model Standing Orders (2025) and the Council's own Standing Orders.

## 2. Public Participation Session

1. A public participation session will be held at the start of each ordinary meeting of the Council for up to 15 minutes in total.
2. Each member of the public may speak for a maximum of three minutes, at the Chair's discretion.
3. The session is an opportunity for members of the public to make representations, ask questions, or give evidence relating to items on the agenda.
4. Questions shall be addressed to the Chair, who may respond directly, refer the matter to another member or the Clerk, or arrange for a written reply after the meeting.
5. The Council may not make any decision on matters raised during the public session unless they are already on the published agenda.
6. The Chair controls this session and has the authority to:
  - o determine the order of speakers;
  - o curtail or extend the session in exceptional circumstances; and
  - o take action under Standing Order 2 (Disorderly Conduct) if necessary.
7. Complaints or matters relating to named individuals must not be raised in the public session and should instead be submitted in writing under the Council's adopted Complaints Procedure.
8. Members of the public are reminded that the meeting may be filmed, photographed, or recorded in accordance with Standing Order 3(l) and the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014.

## 3. Conduct During the Formal Meeting

1. Once the public participation session has ended, the Council meeting will proceed in accordance with its Standing Orders.
2. Members of the public do not have a right to speak during the formal meeting.
3. The Chair may, at their discretion or following a resolution under Standing Order 3(f), invite a member of the public to address the Council on a particular item of business.

4. If a member of the public interrupts the meeting or behaves improperly, the Chair may invoke Standing Order 2 and take appropriate action, including requiring the person to withdraw.
5. Members of the public are welcome to observe the remainder of the meeting but may not participate unless invited to do so.

#### **4. Councillor Conduct During Meetings**

1. Councillors shall conduct themselves in accordance with the Nolan Principles of Public Life and the Council's Code of Conduct.
2. Members shall not speak unless invited by the Chair, and all remarks must be addressed through the Chair.
3. Disorderly or disrespectful conduct by councillors or members of the public will be managed in accordance with Standing Order 2.

#### **5. Minutes and Decisions**

1. Minutes of meetings are a formal legal record and shall not reproduce verbatim statements made during public participation.
2. Only matters formally considered under agenda items may result in Council decisions or resolutions.

#### **6. Review and Adoption**

These rules shall be reviewed annually at the Annual Meeting of the Council or when Standing Orders are next updated. Any amendments must be approved by resolution of the Council.

**Date adopted: 5<sup>th</sup> January 2025**

**Next review: January 2026**