

# **STANDING ORDERS OF ROYAL BERKSHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY**

June 2025



# STANDING ORDERS

## Interpretation

SO1. In these Standing Orders:

- a) the day of issue and the day of delivery of an agenda, or day of the receipt of a written notice of a question, and the day of the meeting are excluded from the calculation of "clear days";
- b) the day of issue and the day of delivery of an agenda and the day of the meeting, Saturdays, Sundays, Christmas Day, Good Friday, statutory bank holidays and a day appointed for public thanksgiving or mourning are excluded from the calculation of "clear working days";
- c) "Combined Area" means the Fire Authority area comprising the areas of Bracknell Forest Borough Council, Reading Borough Council, the Council of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Slough Borough Council, West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council.

## Ordinary Meetings

- SO2. Ordinary meetings shall be held at such places and times as the Authority may determine, and shall normally be held in February, April and November, in accordance with a timetable agreed at the final Meeting of the Municipal Year.
- SO3. The Authority shall hold its Annual Meeting at a place and time and on a day in May or June for which summonses will be sent within seven calendar days after the date of the latest of the Annual Meetings of the six councils within the Combined Area.

## Extraordinary Meetings

- SO4. An Extraordinary Meeting of the Authority may be called at any time by the Chair of the Authority.
- SO5. If the Chair refuses to call an Extraordinary Meeting after receiving a requisition for that purpose, signed by six Members of the Authority or if, without so refusing, the Chair does not call an Extraordinary Meeting

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within seven days after receiving the requisition then any six Members of the Authority, on that refusal or on the expiration of those seven days, as the case may be, the Members in question may forthwith call an Extraordinary Meeting of the Authority.

## Timing of Meetings

SO6. Meetings shall be held at 6.30pm, unless otherwise agreed.

## Chair and Vice-Chair

SO7. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be appointed at the Annual meeting of the Authority.

SO8. The first item of business on the agenda for the Annual Meeting shall be the appointment of a Chair for the coming year for which (subject to SO9) the Vice-Chair from the preceding year shall preside.

SO9. If the Vice-Chair is absent from a meeting of the Authority or is present and wishes to be considered for nomination for the office of Chair, another Member chosen by the Members present shall preside in the manner set out at SO10A-SO10B.

SO10. If the office of Chair or Vice-Chair becomes vacant at any time, the Authority shall elect from its Members a person to replace the office holder. Such an election to replace the Chair shall take place no later than the next ordinary meeting of the Authority after the office has become vacant conducted in accordance with SO8 and SO9.

SO10A. Where there are more than two persons nominated for any position to be filled (including any Chair or Vice-Chair) and there is not a majority of all votes cast in favour of one person, 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 one person receives a majority of all the votes cast.

SO10B. If there is no Member presiding, in the event of an equality of votes between nominees in the last round of open voting the position between them will be determined by secret ballot. If the result of the ballot remains tied the nominees will agree that the position will be determined by the drawing of lots.

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## Agendas and Reports

- SO11. At least five clear [working] days before any meeting of the Authority, a summons to attend the meeting, specifying the business to be transacted thereat and signed by the Monitoring Officer shall be left at or sent by post to the usual place of residence of every Member of the Authority or to such address (including email address) as a Member may notify for that purpose to the Monitoring Officer.

## Attendance Book

- SO12. Every Member of the Authority attending a meeting of the Authority shall sign his/her name in the attendance book or sheet provided for that purpose.

## Quorum

- SO13. The quorum at a meeting of the Authority shall be 7 Members.
- SO14. If, during any meeting of the Authority, the Chair, after counting the number of Members present, declares that there is not a quorum present, the meeting shall stand adjourned. 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 such a time is not fixed, to the next ordinary meeting of the Authority.

## Order of Business

- SO15. Subject to what follows, the order of business at every meeting of the Authority will be:
- a) to choose a person to preside if the Chair and Vice-Chair are absent;
  - b) to deal with any item required by statute to be done before any other item;
  - c) to receive any apologies for absence and any changes in Membership since the last meeting of the Authority.
  - d) to approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the last meeting of the Authority;

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- e) to receive petitions and questions from the public;
- f) to receive such communications as the Chair may desire to lay before the Authority;
- g) to dispose of business (if any) remaining from a previous meeting;
- h) to receive and consider the recommendations of Committees;
- i) to answer questions by Members asked under Standing Order SO30;
- j) to consider Motions under Standing Order SO43 in the order received;
- k) other business, if any, specified in the Agenda; and
- l) to note minutes of Committees.

SO16. The order of business (with the exception of items (a), (b) (c) and (d)) may be altered by the Chair of the Authority, or by a resolution following a motion moved, seconded and put to the meeting without debate.

## Minutes

SO17. The minutes of the business considered and decisions reached at each meeting of the Authority shall be printed and a copy sent to each Member with or prior to the Agenda to attend the next meeting of the Authority. Alternatively, where the member has given consent the minutes of the business considered and decisions reached shall be transmitted in electronic form to a particular address.

SO18. When the minutes of a previous meeting come before the Authority, the Authority shall firstly determine any questions raised as to their accuracy and when approved the Chair shall sign the minutes. No other motion or discussion shall take place upon the minutes, except that a Member may request information as to progress or further development of any matter referred to in the minutes.

## Petitions

SO19. Any petition to be submitted to the Authority must be in writing and signed by at least 25 local government electors of the Combined Area who shall also state their addresses. Any Petition must be submitted to the

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Monitoring Officer not less than seven clear working days before the meeting at which it is first to be presented. The Monitoring Officer shall date and number each petition on receipt of it and enter it in a book which anyone may inspect.

- SO20. No petition shall relate to any matter of a personal nature.
- SO21. The Monitoring Officer, upon receiving a petition shall present the same, to the next meeting of Authority.
- SO22. Any local government elector of the Combined Area who is a signatory to a petition may be present at the Authority meeting and may speak upon the petition for not more than five minutes, which period of time may be extended with the consent of the Authority. Only one elector may speak upon any petition. No Member of the Authority shall be permitted to speak under this Standing Order.
- SO23. No petition shall be accepted if a petition with the same or similar object has been heard by the Authority, within a period of six months prior to the receipt by the Monitoring Officer of the petition.
- SO24. A petition once received may be acted upon by the Authority.

## Questions from the Public

- SO25. At any ordinary meeting of the Authority, any registered local government elector within the Combined Area and any individual acting on behalf of a trade union recognised by the Authority, may ask one question relating to the business of the Authority, **provided that written notice has been given of the question to the Monitoring Officer no later than 2.00pm two clear working days before the meeting of the Authority** at which the question is to be asked.
- SO26. The Monitoring Officer may, having consulted the questioner, reword any question received before circulation to Members of the Authority to bring it into proper order or delete improper or unbecoming language.
- SO27. Questions under SO25 shall be taken by the Chair in the order in which they are received by the Monitoring Officer. Questions shall be asked and answered without discussion. The Chair may decline to answer a question, provide a written reply or nominate another Member to answer it on his/her behalf.

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- SO28. A person asking a question may ask one supplementary question arising directly from the answer given, provided that it is relevant to the original question and does not introduce any new subject matter.
- SO29. The time allowed for written and supplementary public questions shall not exceed 25 minutes. Questions not answered within that period shall be the subject of a written reply.

## Written Questions by Members

- SO30. If the Member has given the notice required by SO31 he/she may ask up to three questions at anyone meeting on any of the functions of the Authority or any business relating to a joint committee or body to which the Authority appoints representatives.
- SO31. A Member wishing to ask a question under SO30 shall send a signed copy of the question to be asked to the Monitoring Officer via [committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:committeeteam@rbfrs.co.uk), **to be received no later than 2.00pm two clear working days before the meeting of the Authority** at which the question is to be asked.
- SO32. In cases of urgency as determined by the Chair, Members may submit questions without complying with the timetable specified in the preceding subsection.
- SO33. Every question asked under SO30 shall be put when the item "Questions" is reached on the agenda.
- SO34. No such question shall be the subject of a speech or motion.
- SO35. One supplementary question may be asked by the questioner providing it introduces no new matter, or, if the questioner does not exercise this right, another Member of the Authority.
- SO36. The time allocated to questions shall not exceed thirty minutes.
- SO37. Questions shall be taken in the order in which they are received by the Monitoring Officer and questions not answered within the allocated time shall be the subject of a written reply within seven days to all members.
- SO38. A Member submitting a question may indicate if he/she wishes the question to be the subject of a written reply to be circulated to all Members

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of the Authority before the meeting. If the Chair of the Authority is able to and chooses to accede to such request, the question and answer shall be circulated to all Members and published.

- SO39. Where a Member is unable through absence to put a question under SO30 when it is reached on the agenda, such question shall be deemed to have been put and shall thereupon be answered if the Member has indicated his/her willingness for it to be so put in the notice given in accordance with SO31.
- SO40. Where the reply to any question cannot conveniently be given orally, the answer shall be circulated to Members of the Authority at the outset of the meeting.
- SO41. A question may be answered by the Chair, the Chair of a committee or by such other Member or Members as the Chair of the meeting may decide.
- SO42. No question shall be asked at any meeting summoned by the Chair or by the requisition of members under Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 unless it is relevant to the business for which such a meeting is called. The Chair shall decide whether the question is relevant.

## Motions and Amendments without notice

- SO43. A Member may move without notice any of the following Motions and amendments:
- a) To appoint a Chair for that meeting or the remainder of the Meeting.
  - b) Motions relating to the accuracy of the Minutes.
  - c) To vary the order of the Agenda.
  - d) That a matter be referred or referred back to a Committee
  - e) To give leave to withdraw or amend Motion.
  - f) To extend the time limit for speeches.

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- g) To move on to the next item on the Agenda.
- h) To put the question immediately to the vote.
- i) To adjourn the debate.
- j) To adjourn the meeting.
- k) To suspend one or more Standing Orders.
- l) To exclude the public from the meeting under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972
- m) Not to hear a Member further.
- n) By the Chair to require a Member to leave the meeting.
- o) To give any consent required by these Standing Orders.

## Notices of Motion

- SO44. A Motion not listed in SO43 must be given in writing to the Monitoring Officer at least seven clear working days before the Authority meeting and be signed by the Member(s) giving the notice.
- SO45. Motions must relate to matters where the Authority has powers or duties or which affect the Combined Area.
- SO45A. A Notice of Motion of No Confidence may be given concerning any Member in a position for which a Special Responsibility Allowance is listed in the Authority's Scheme of Allowances unless by virtue of being a Group Leader (irrespective of whether such allowance is claimed or paid). It must be signed by no less than seven Members before being given in accordance with SO44 and the following provisions apply:
- a) The Notice must detail the reasons for the Motion of No Confidence and have regard to the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct.

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- b) No amendments will be allowed to the Motion of No Confidence at the meeting where the matter is discussed.
- c) If a Motion of No Confidence is passed which results in the removal of a Chair or Vice-Chair, the Authority or the Committee (as the case may be) will be required to consider the appointment of its Chair or Vice- Chair (as appropriate) at its next scheduled meeting.

SO46. The Monitoring Officer shall:

- a) date and number each Notice of Motion on receipt of it and enter it in a book which anyone may inspect; and
- b) set out in the Agenda for the Authority meeting all Motions which comply with the requirements of SO44, SO45 and SO45A of these Standing Orders in the order they have been received, unless the Member(s) has (have) in writing either withdrawn it or stated a wish to move it at a later meeting.

SO47. The Authority will treat as withdrawn any Motion not moved at the meeting at which it appears upon the Agenda, unless its postponement is agreed.

SO48. Any Motion the subject matter of which comes within the province of any Committee(s) may:

- a) be referred without discussion to such Committee(s); or
- b) be referred without discussion to such other Committee(s) as the Authority may decide; or
- c) be dealt with at the meeting at which it is moved if the Authority considers that it would be convenient to do so.

SO49. The Member who has moved the Motion must be notified by the Monitoring Officer of the meeting(s) of the Committee(s) which it has been referred, and has the right to attend the meeting(s) and to explain the Motion.

SO50. If it appears to the Monitoring Officer that a motion of which he/ she has received notice is not in order, or is framed in improper or unbecoming language, he shall take the direction of the Chair as to whether and in what form it shall be placed on the agenda, and the decision of the Chair, after consultation if possible with the giver of the notice, shall be final.

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- SO51. If a Motion, notice of which has been given in the Authority agenda, be not moved by the Member who has given notice thereof, such Motion may, with the consent of the Authority given by a show of hands without debate, be moved by some other Member, otherwise it shall be deemed to have been withdrawn and shall not be moved without fresh notice.
- SO52. No Motion to rescind any resolution passed within the preceding six months, and no motions or amendments to the same effect as one which has been rejected within the preceding six months, shall be proposed unless the notice thereof bears the name of at least seven Members of the Authority. When any such motion or amendment has been disposed of by the Authority, it shall not be open to any Member to propose a similar motion within a further period of six months. This SO52 shall not apply to motions moved in pursuance of a recommendation of a Committee.

## Committee Recommendations and Minutes

- SO53. Any Member of the Authority may ask the Chair of a Committee any question upon an item in the recommendations or Minutes of that Committee then before the Authority, if the question is put before the consideration of these items by the Authority has been concluded.
- SO54. The Chair concerned may at any time nominate his/her Vice-Chair or any other Member with special responsibility to answer any such question.
- SO55. Whenever a Committee, in exercise of power delegated to it, resolves to take action or to take no action on any matter, there shall be no debate on this decision except that:
- a) any Member may comment on the decision;
  - b) if a decision shall state no action, a motion may be put to ask the Committee to reconsider its decision;
  - c) a motion may be put to express the Authority's disapproval of the action taken.

## Matters to be included in Agendas

- SO56. Members' requests for items to be included on the agenda for a meeting of the Authority shall be in writing and received by the Monitoring Officer at least ten clear days before the next ordinary meeting of the Authority, failing which they shall not be so included without the express approval of the Chair of the Authority.

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## Rules of Debate for Authority Meetings

- SO57. Whenever the Chair signals during a debate, a Member then speaking and all Members except the Chair shall be silent.
- SO58. A Member seeking to speak shall so indicate by raising his/her hand and shall speak when called to do so by the Chair.
- SO59. A Member, when speaking, shall address the Chair.
- SO60. A Member shall direct his/her speech strictly to the subject matter under discussion.
- SO61. Unless with the consent of the Authority, to be ascertained by a show of hands without debate, no Member shall speak for more than five minutes on the question under discussion with the exception of the mover of the original motion giving rise thereto, who in moving his/her proposition shall not, save with the like consent, speak for more than ten minutes.
- SO62. Any extra time agreed to by the Authority shall be limited to one period of five minutes only.
- SO63. SO61 shall not apply to a speech by the Member moving the Budget, for the ensuing year, but shall apply to his/her reply.
- SO64. No motion or amendment shall be spoken upon except by the mover until it has been seconded.
- SO65. Any Member may formally second a motion or an amendment, in which case he may speak later in the debate.
- SO66. A Member shall not (except in the exercise of his/her right to reply) speak more than once on the same motion or amendment except to a point of order, or by way of personal explanation. The mover of an amendment shall have no right of reply to the debate on his/her amendment.
- SO67. Any amendment to a motion shall be either:
- a) to refer a subject of debate to a Committee for consideration or re-consideration;
  - b) to leave out words;
  - c) to leave out words and insert or add others;

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d) to insert or add words;

but such omission, insertion or addition of words shall not have the effect of negating the motion before the Authority.

- SO68. When an amendment is moved and seconded, no other amendment shall be taken into consideration until the first has been disposed of, provided that the Chair may permit 2 or more amendments to be considered together (but not voted upon), if, in his/her opinion, this course will facilitate the proper conduct of the Authority's business.
- SO69. If an amendment be carried, it shall displace the original motion and become itself the substantive motion, upon which any further amendment may be moved, provided such further amendment is not inconsistent with the alterations of the original motion made by the amendment which has been carried, and provided that any further amendment is not a direct negative of the motion.
- SO70. A Member may, with the consent of the Authority, to be ascertained by a show of hands without debate, alter an original motion which he has moved, or proposes to move, provided that the alteration be such as could be moved as an amendment under this Standing Order.
- SO71. A motion or amendment may be withdrawn by the mover with the consent of a seconder and of the Authority, to be ascertained by a show of hands without debate, and no Member may speak upon it after the mover has asked permission for its withdrawal; unless such permission shall have been refused.
- SO72. The mover of a motion, or of an amendment which has become the substantive motion, shall have a right of reply. After reply, the motion shall be put from the chair without further debate. The mover of an original motion, or of an amendment which has become a substantive motion, shall not introduce new matter in his/her reply.
- SO73. A Member of the Authority, other than the mover or seconder of a motion or amendment before the Authority, may at any time formally move "that the Authority proceed to the other business of the day" on the formal seconding of which the Chair shall immediately put the same to the Authority without speech or debate, and if carried by show of hands, the subject in debate shall be considered as disposed of.

- SO74. It shall be competent for a Member of the Authority, other than the mover or seconder of a motion or amendment before the Authority, at any time to move formally "that the question be now put", and upon being formally seconded, it shall be put forthwith without speech or debate. Where an amendment is under discussion, the motion shall apply only to that amendment. If the motion be carried, then, if the question before the Authority be the original motion or a first amendment, the Chair shall call upon the mover of the original motion to reply before putting the question.
- SO75. Upon the motion for an adjournment, all the speakers shall limit their observations to the question of adjournment. After a motion for adjournment of a debate, or the adjournment of the Authority has been rejected, another motion for the same or the like purpose shall not be moved within thirty minutes, except by consent of the Authority, to be ascertained by show of hands without debate. On resuming an adjournment debate, the Member who moved the adjournment shall be entitled to speak first.
- SO76. The Chair may at any time upon being satisfied that any motion or other matter has been fully debated by the Authority require that "the question be now put" but before the question be put, the mover of the original motion shall be entitled to exercise his/her right of reply.
- SO77. The ruling of the Chair, on the advice of the Monitoring Officer, as to the construction or application of these Standing Orders, or as to proceedings of the Authority, shall not be challenged at any meeting of the Authority.

## **PERSONAL EXPLANATION AND POINTS OF ORDER**

- SO78. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of an earlier speech by the Member and on which a misunderstanding has occurred.
- SO79. A point of order is a request by a Member to the Chair of the Authority to rule on an alleged irregularity in the constitution or procedure in the meeting.
- SO80. A Member may rise on a personal explanation or a point of order at any time and is entitled immediately to address the Chair of the Authority on the matter; but the Member who raises a point of order must specify immediately a Standing Order or statutory provision, and say how it has

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been broken or infringed and in either case the Member's speech must be confined to the personal explanation or point of order.

- SO81. The ruling of the Chair of the Authority on the advice of the Monitoring Officer on a personal explanation or point of order is not open to discussion.

## **ORDER AT AUTHORITY MEETINGS**

- SO82. If at a meeting any Member of the Authority, in the opinion of the Chair, notified to the Authority, misconducts his/her self by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair, or by wilfully obstructing the business of the Authority, the Chair, or any other Member, may formally move "that the Member named be not further heard" and the motion, upon being formally seconded, shall be put and determined without speech or debate.
- SO83. If the Member named continues his/her misconduct after a motion under the foregoing paragraph has been carried, the Chair shall either:
- a) move "that the Member named do leave the meeting" (in which case, the motion shall be put and determined without seconding or discussion); or
  - b) adjourn the meeting of the Authority for such a period as his/her discretion shall consider expedient.
- SO84. In the event of general disturbance which, in the opinion of the Chair, renders the due and orderly dispatch of business impossible, the Chair in addition to any other power vested in him/her may, without discussion, adjourn the meeting of the Authority for such period as in his/her discretion shall consider expedient.
- SO85. The Chair may call a Member to order for irrelevance, repetition, imputation of dishonourable conduct or improper remarks, unseemly language, offensive gestures or any breach of order and may direct a Member, if speaking to discontinue his/her speech and any Member of the Authority may rise to call the attention of the Chair to any of the said matters during the speech of a Member.
- SO86. If a member of the public interrupts the proceedings at any meeting, the Chair may warn him/her. If they continue to interrupt, the Chair may order his/her removal from the meeting room.

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## **VOTING**

- SO87. The mode of voting at meetings of the Authority shall be by show of hands. Members must be seated when the vote is taken.
- SO88. Where immediately after a vote is taken at a meeting:
- (a) any Member may require that his/her vote cast for or against the question or whether he/she abstained from voting is recorded in the Minutes;
  - (b) any Member of the Authority may require, the number of those voting on any question shall be recorded and entered in the Minutes of the Meeting;
  - (c) any Member, supported by two other Members, so requires, the voting on any question shall be recorded so as to show how each Member present, and voting, gave his/her vote;
  - (d) which is a budget decision meeting of the Authority there shall be recorded in the minutes of the proceedings of that meeting the names of the Members who cast a vote for the decision or against the decision or who abstained from voting.
- SO89. In the case of equality of votes, the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

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

- SO90. A Member who has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest
- a) if the interest has not been registered, shall disclose the interest; and
  - b) shall not participate in discussion of the matter, or vote on the matter and shall leave the Chamber/room when the matter is being considered unless he or she has been granted a dispensation by the Monitoring Officer.
- SO91. Members shall have regard to the provisions of the [Fire Authority's Code of Conduct](#) when taking decisions at meetings of the Fire Authority and its Committees.

## **INTEREST OF OFFICERS IN CONTRACTS**

- SO92. If any officer of the Authority has an interest, direct or indirect, within the meaning of Section 117 of the Local Government Act 1972 in any contract,

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proposed contract or other matter under consideration by the Authority, he/she shall withdraw from the meeting, unless the contract, proposed contract or other matter is under consideration by the Authority as part of the Minutes of a Committee or Sub-Committee and is not itself the subject of debate.

## **CANVASSING OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS BY MEMBERS**

- SO93. Canvassing of Members of the Authority directly or indirectly, for any staff appointment under the Authority shall disqualify the candidate concerned for that appointment. The purport of this paragraph shall be brought to the attention of applicants.
- SO94. A Member of the Authority shall not solicit for or against any person for any staff appointment under the Authority, but this shall not preclude a Member from giving a written testimonial of a candidate's character for submission to the Authority with an application for appointment.

## **RELATIVES OF MEMBERS OR OFFICERS**

- SO95. A candidate for any appointment under the Authority who knows that he/she is related to any Member or senior officer of the Authority shall, when making application, disclose that relationship. A candidate who fails to disclose such a relationship shall be disqualified for the appointment and if appointed, shall be liable to dismissal without notice. Every Member and senior officer of the Authority shall disclose to the Monitoring Officer any relationship known to him to exist between himself and any person who he knows is a candidate for an appointment under the Authority.

The Monitoring Officer shall report to the Authority, or to the appropriate Committee, Sub-Committee or person having power to make the appointment, any such disclosure.

- SO96. SO95 shall be drawn to the attention of applicants and for the purpose of this, SO95 "senior officer" means the Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Fire Officer, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Director of Support Services and Chief Finance Officer or equivalent.
- SO97. In all other cases declarations shall be made to the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive.

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## **APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF FIRE OFFICER OR CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

SO98. Where the Authority proposes to appoint a Chief Fire Officer or Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer shall:

- a) draw up a statement specifying:
  - i) the duties of the officer concerned; and
  - ii) any qualifications or qualities to be sought in the person to be appointed;
  - iii) make arrangements for the post to be advertised in such a way as is likely to bring it to the attention of persons who are qualified to apply for it, and;
  - iv) make arrangements for a copy of the statement mentioned in paragraph;
- b) above to be sent to any person on request.

SO99. Where a post has been advertised as provided in SO98 the Authority shall:

- a) interview all qualified applicants for the post; or
- b) select a short list of such qualified applicants and interview those included on the short list.

SO100. Where no qualified person has applied, the Monitoring Officer shall make further arrangements for the post to be advertised in accordance with this Standing Order.

## **MEMBERS' ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS**

SO101. On application to the Monitoring Officer and subject to the remaining paragraphs of this Standing Order, a Member of the Authority may, for the purposes of his/her duty as such a Member but not otherwise, inspect any document which has been considered by the Authority or by a Committee or Sub-Committee and, if copies are available, shall on request be supplied for the like purposes with a copy of such a document.

SO102. No Member may knowingly call for the inspection nor call for any copy of any document relating to a matter in which he/she are professionally interested or in which he/she have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, and whether disclosed or not, within the meaning of the Localism Act 2011 and the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

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SO103. The Monitoring Officer may decline to allow inspection of any document which has been or is to be considered by a Committee or Sub-Committee which in his/her opinion discloses exempt information of a description for the time being falling within paragraphs 1 to 7, of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

SO104. Any document or information contained within a document which is inspected by or copied to a Member of the Authority shall remain subject to the same restrictions on its disclosure as existed before the inspection or copying. In particular, any confidential information within the meaning of Section 100A(3) or exempt information within the meaning of Section 100I and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 remains confidential or exempt, as the case may be.

### **INSPECTION OF LANDS, PREMISES etc**

SO105. Unless duly authorised, no Member of the Authority shall issue any order respecting any works which are being carried out by or on behalf of the Authority, nor claim by virtue of their membership of the Authority any right to inspect or to enter upon any Fire Stations land or premises which the Authority has the power or duty to enter or which are owned by the Authority.

### **EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS**

SO106. No group of Members or individual Member, other than a duly constituted committee or sub-committee acting in exercise of its delegated powers where applicable and in accordance with its terms of reference, shall be entitled to take any action on behalf of the Authority or to issue any instruction to an officer of the Authority to take executive action.

### **APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

SO107. The Authority shall every year at the Annual Meeting decide by resolution which Committees it intends to establish as "Standing Committees", and shall appoint Members to such Committee.

SO107A.No Committee shall be summonsed to convene on either the date of the Annual Meeting nor the date of another Committee.

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SO107B. At the first meeting of a Committee or Sub-Committee following the Annual Meeting of the Authority, the Committee or Sub-Committee will elect its Chair and Vice-Chair for the year as follows:

- a) a Member will be chosen by vote to preside over the election of the Chair for the year. Where there are more than two persons nominated to preside and there is not a majority of all votes cast in favour of one person, 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 one person receives a majority of all the votes cast;
- b) if an equality of votes results in no Member being chosen in accordance with SO107B(a) the Vice-Chair from the preceding year shall preside over the election of the Chair for the year and SO89 will therefore apply
- c) If the Vice-Chair from the preceding year is absent from the meeting or is present and wishes to be considered for nomination for the office of Chair in the event of an equality of votes between the nominees in the last round of open voting the position between them will be determined by secret ballot. If the result of the ballot remains tied the nominees will agree that the position will be determined by the drawing of lots.

SO108. Any Committee may appoint sub committees to discharge any of its functions, subject to the approval of the Authority as to the particular functions to be discharged.

SO109. The term of office of each Committee (or Sub-Committee) Member shall expire at the Annual Meeting next after their appointment, or at such earlier time as the Authority shall determine, or by resignation.

SO110. Where a Member is unable to attend a meeting of a Committee, or a Sub-Committee, the Member, or representative of that Member's political group may nominate another Member of the Authority to attend as their substitute, provided the Monitoring Officer is given notice of the proposed change whereupon the provisions of SO [119] and SO[120] shall apply.

SO111. The quorum of the Management Committee shall be 4 and the quorum of the Audit and Governance Committee shall be 3. The quorum for additional Committees or Sub-Committee shall be 3 Members of the Committee or Sub-Committee concerned or such greater number of Members as the Authority may determine.

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## **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

SO112. The Monitoring Officer shall summon any Committee or Sub-Committee or group of Members appointed by a Committee or Sub-Committee to consider or deal with a specific matter at the time and date previously resolved, or on request of the Chair, or without request to deal with business of urgency which, in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer necessitates a meeting of the Committee or Sub-Committee.

## **PROCEDURE AT COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

SO113. The Standing Orders of the Authority shall apply to Committee and Sub-Committee meetings, except SO2 - SO10; SO13- SO42 and SO44-SO52.

## **RESIGNATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

SO114. Any Member of a Committee may resign his/her membership of a Committee, Sub-Committee or other body by notice in writing signed by him and delivered to the Monitoring Officer, which shall become effective immediately.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

SO115. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972 all Authority, Committee and Sub-Committee reports and documents marked as "Confidential" shall be treated as confidential at all times. In relation to reports and documents marked "Exempt" they shall be treated as confidential until they become public in the ordinary course of the Authority's business and the following classification shall be used for reports to the Authority or its Committees and Sub-Committees:

- a) "CONFIDENTIAL - Not for publication at any time by virtue of Section 100A(2) of the Local Government Act 1972" - Reports dealing with information supplied by a Government Department on condition that it is kept confidential or where the disclosure of information in the report is prohibited by statute or court order.
- b) "EXEMPT - Not for publication unless authorised by the Authority/Committee/Sub-Committee. Report contains exempt information by virtue of paragraph(s) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972" - Reports which the Proper Officer considers contain exempt information and are likely to be considered in private.

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**(NOTE: The Authority, Committee or Sub-Committee may still resolve to deal with the report in public at the meeting itself)**

## **THE SEAL AND EXECUTION OF DOCUMENTS**

- SO116. The Common Seal shall be kept in a safe place in the custody of the Monitoring Officer.
- SO117. Any decision of the Authority, a Committee or Sub-Committee or Officer exercising delegated functions shall be deemed to authorise the affixing of the Common Seal to that document and the affixing of the Common Seal shall be attested by the Monitoring Officer or Chief Finance Officer.
- SO118. Where any document will be a necessary step in legal proceedings on behalf of the Authority, it shall be signed by the Monitoring Officer or such other officer as may be designated by him unless any enactment requires otherwise provided that the Authority or a Committee or Sub-Committee exercising delegated powers, if legally entitled, may authorise some other officer to execute any such document.

## **SUBSTITUTION**

- SO119. The nomination of a substitute given in accordance with SO110 shall be in writing specifying the Committee to which it relates and the period or periods of time for which the substitution shall apply, and shall be signed and sent by the substituted Member's political group representative for the purpose of the Authority, to the Monitoring Officer to the Authority. Upon receipt, the Monitoring Officer will amend the Members' Register accordingly.
- SO120. A Member attending as substitute shall, at the commencement of the Meeting, identify the Member on whose behalf he attends, who shall then be excluded from participation in that Meeting.
- SO121. A Member, attending as a substitute in the absence of the Member from any Meeting of the relevant Committee shall be entitled to attend, speak and vote at the Meeting (but not, in the case of the nominating Member being the Chair or Vice-Chair, to exercise the rights and functions of that office).

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## **VARIATION OR REVOCATION OF STANDING ORDERS**

- SO122. These Standing Orders shall not be amended, added to or rescinded unless notice shall have first been given to the Members in the Authority Agenda and such notice shall state the terms and effect of any proposed variation or revocation of these Standing Orders.
- SO123. The Authority will review the operation of these Standing Orders no later than every four years.

## **SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS**

- SO124. Except in respect of SO7 to SO10 (Chair and Vice-Chair), SO44 to SO52 (Notices of Motion), SO17 & SO18 (Minutes); SO87 to SO89 (Voting); SO92 to SO97 (Staff /interests) and SO107 (Appointment of Committees and Sub-Committees), any Member may, for any stated purpose, move the suspension of any Standing Order of the Authority and the motion, on being seconded, shall be put forthwith without speech or debate.

## **STANDING ORDERS TO BE SUPPLIED TO MEMBERS**

- SO125. The Monitoring Officer shall arrange for a printed or electronic copy of these Standing Orders to be provided to each Member of the Authority upon being first appointed a Member of the Authority.

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