



STANDING ORDERS FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS
Approved by the Council at its meeting on Tuesday 15th June 2021

1. RULES OF DEBATE

- 1.1 Speakers must address the Chair and no Councillor shall interrupt a speaker except on a point of order, which must deal only with procedure.
- 1.2 A Councillor may raise a point of information only with the consent of the Chair. The function of a point of information is to seek rather than to give information.
- 1.3 Subject to the provisions of 1.9 below, the Chair's ruling on any point whatsoever shall be binding unless it is challenged by at least two Councillors, in which case the General Secretary shall immediately submit the motion "that the Chair's ruling be upheld" to the vote of the meeting without discussion.
- 1.4 All motions and amendments shall be moved and seconded before being discussed. No "direct negative" to any motion shall be taken as an amendment.
- 1.5 A motion or amendment which has been moved and seconded may not be withdrawn by the mover without the consent of the meeting.
- 1.6 The mover of an original motion but not the mover of an amendment shall have the right to reply, but he or she shall not introduce any fresh matter. No other Councillor shall speak more than once on any one motion or amendment except by special permission of the Chair.
- 1.7 When a mover of a motion has replied, the Chair shall proceed to take the vote forthwith. After the vote has been taken upon any question no further discussion upon the same subject shall be allowed at that meeting.
- 1.8 The vote(s) on any amendment(s) shall precede the vote on the original motion and, if the amendment(s) is (are) carried, the amended motion shall then be put to the meeting as the substantive motion.
- 1.9 Any Councillor may move "that the question be now put" (meaning that the matter has been sufficiently debated) or "next business" (meaning that the meeting shall proceed to the next business and allow the matter under discussion to drop), provided that they have not previously spoken in the particular debate. A motion "that the question be now put" or "next business", if accepted by the Chair whose ruling may not be challenged under 1.3 above, shall be put to the vote immediately and without discussion. If a motion "that the question be now put" is carried, the mover of the

original motion has the right to reply before the motion is put to the vote of the meeting.

- 1.10 Any Councillor refusing to obey when called to order shall be named from the Chair. If the named Councillor still refuses to come to order they shall be expelled from the meeting.
- 1.11 **Limitation of speeches:** Except at the discretion of the Chair, a Councillor in moving a motion shall be allowed not more than five minutes to move the motion; the seconder and subsequent speakers, including the right of reply, shall be allowed not more than three minutes.
- 1.12 **Matters Arising:** Matters arising shall be strictly limited to actual matters arising from the minutes normally by way of a question or progress report and shall not be used as an opportunity to put a motion, to raise a new issue or to re-visit a previous decision or discussion.
- 1.13 **Reversing a Council decision:** A motion which seeks to reverse, or has the effect of reversing, a decision of the Council shall not be accepted at the same meeting at which that decision was taken or at a subsequent meeting unless prior notice has been given on the agenda of such a motion.
 - 1.13.1 **A Councillor wishing to put a motion** which seeks to reverse, or has the effect of reversing, a decision of the Council must submit the motion to the General Secretary before 09.00 am on the Monday preceding the Council circulation (i.e. the Monday immediately preceding the circulation of the Council agenda on the following Friday).
 - 1.13.1.1 A procedural motion "that the matter be re-opened" will be required at the Council meeting.
 - 1.13.1.2 The Councillor shall be invited by the Chair to move the procedural motion and they must restrict their arguments to why the matter should be re-opened. They shall be allowed a maximum of 5 minutes to propose the motion; the motion will then be formally seconded and the Chair will call for one speaker against the procedural motion (who will also be allowed 5 minutes to speak) and the matter will then be put to the vote immediately and without discussion.
 - 1.13.1.3 If the procedural motion is carried the Councillor may then proceed to move their motion provided it is seconded. If the procedural motion is defeated the Chair shall move to next business if any.
- 1.14 **Councillor's Motion:** A Councillor may bring an ordinary motion to Council on an issue which a Councillor believes is important for the Council to discuss. A Councillor cannot bring a motion on behalf of a Branch or Committee. Any ordinary motion must not be more than 250 words. An ordinary motion must be received by the General Secretary no later than 9.00am on the Monday immediately preceding the circulation of the Council agenda on the following Friday. If a Councillor is absent and his/her motion is reached on the agenda this motion shall be deferred to a meeting when the Councillor

is in attendance to propose the motion, unless the Council believes that the issue requires an urgent decision, in which case the Councillor may nominate another member of the Council to move the motion. Failing that an Officer shall move the motion.

- 1.15 **Emergency Items:** A Councillor, Branch, Committee or Sub-Committee may submit an emergency item to the Council meeting. These should be items where the issue is within the competence of Council which could not have been known by any Councillor, Branch, Committee or Sub-Committee by midnight on the Friday before the Council Circulation. It must meet the usual criteria for the submission of a motion and it must be a genuine emergency. No deadline will be applicable, it will be at the discretion of the General Secretary as to whether an emergency item has been received with sufficient time to be raised in the Council meeting.

2. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 2.1 Subject to the provisions of 2.2 and 2.3 below, the agenda for Council meetings and the subject matter of such agendas shall be confidential from the news media and Councillors shall not discuss matters on the agenda with the news media until after the meeting has taken place, unless specifically authorised by the General Secretary.
- 2.2 Normally the proceedings of Council meetings shall not be confidential. However the Chair or General Secretary may recommend, or a Councillor may suggest, at any point in the meeting that a specific item of Council business should be confidential, in which case the Chair will ask for a proposer and seconder for a formal motion “that the item be treated as confidential”. This motion shall be put to the vote immediately and without discussion and, if agreed, the item shall be confidential to the entire Council and any other persons present at the meeting for the item.
- 2.3 Notwithstanding 2.1 and 2.2 above, the following items shall automatically be treated as confidential:
- 2.3.1 Any individual cases where members are involved in claims or other similar personal matters.
- 2.3.2 Information on fees, terms and conditions of employment or earnings of individual members or visiting artists.
- 2.3.3 Discussions on negotiations currently in progress.
- 2.4 Any item of business which the Council has agreed should be treated as confidential, under 2.2 or 2.3 above, shall be identified as such in the minutes.
- 2.4.1 A separate minute of this shall be kept and marked '*Confidential*' which will record the discussion on the item and any decision taken by the Council. This minute will be held by the General Secretary.

- 2.4.2 All *Confidential Minutes* shall be circulated to the Council in advance of the following meeting at which they may be corrected.
- 2.4.3 Once corrected, Councillors shall be able retain a copy of such minutes for their records. However, the Council may agree to withdraw this facility and the facility of circulation in advance at any time.
- 2.4.4 The *Confidential Minutes* will be incorporated into the *General Minutes* once the items are no longer deemed to be confidential. It will be the responsibility of the General Secretary to monitor the progress of *Confidential Minutes*.
- 2.5 The minutes of Council meetings shall not be published or quoted until they have been confirmed as correct.
- 2.5.1 At the end of a Council's two-year term of office all members of the outgoing Council, including those members who have not been re-elected to serve for a further two-year term of Office, shall receive the minutes of the final meeting of that Council and shall be entitled to submit corrections to those minutes. Those members not re-elected shall be bound by Standing Order 2 on Confidentiality in the same way as currently serving members of the Council and any breach of that standing order may lead to a complaint and possible disciplinary action under Rule 28: Disciplinary Procedures.

2.6 **Confidentiality of Council Papers**

- 2.6.1 All papers drafted for and circulated to the Council shall be confidential to the Council even if they are not specifically marked '*Confidential*' and shall not be disclosed to any third party in advance of the Council meeting.
- 2.6.2 Notwithstanding 2.6.1 above, unless the paper is specifically marked '*Confidential*' or is covered by Standing Order 2.3, a Councillor may discuss an issue at a Committee or Branch meeting which touches on the subject matter in any paper about to be discussed at the next Council meeting. However the paper in question may not be circulated.
- 2.6.3 In all circumstances a Council paper shall not be circulated at any time beyond the Council without the prior agreement of both the Council and the General Secretary.
- 2.7 If a Councillor or member who has been invited to attend a Council meeting breaches any of the Standing Orders on confidentiality as set out above, they may be open to a complaint and possible disciplinary action under Rule 28: Disciplinary Procedures.

3. **COUNCILLOR'S REPORT TO COMMITTEES AND BRANCHES**

- 3.1 The Councillor shall give, on behalf of the Council, a factual and accurate report on the decisions and activities of the Council which shall be based on the Council meetings and, when possible, corrected Council minutes and the official published Council Report. The report may be either verbal or written.

- 3.2 In order to distinguish between a factual report on the decisions and activities of the Council and the Councillor's own personal opinions or views when providing a written report, the Councillor must clearly identify which is which. Equally, when making a verbal report, a Councillor must differentiate also between factual reporting and their personal views.
- 3.3 The Union's resources may be used to circulate the report from any Councillor who has a duty under Rule 16.4 to provide such a report to all members of the relevant committee. Such a written report must also be available to members attending a meeting of the relevant committee.
- 3.4 The Union's resources may not be used for any other circulation. However, the Councillor may choose to circulate their Councillor's Report to other members at their own expense.
- 3.5 A copy of any Councillor's written report shall be sent to the Official responsible for the relevant Committee and to the General Secretary.
- 3.6 A copy of any Councillor's written report shall be available to other Councillors on request and made available by the General Secretary at meetings of the Council for information.
- 3.7 Any Councillor wishing to make a specific written report to the Council on the activities of the relevant committee, under Rule 16.4, must inform the General Secretary who shall arrange for the Councillor's Report to be included on the Agenda for a meeting of the Council. The report must be factual and accurate.
- 3.8 If a Councillor breaches any of the Standing Orders for giving a Councillor's Report as set out above, they may be open to a complaint and possible disciplinary action under Rule 28: Disciplinary Procedures.

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 4.1 The appearance of an unmanaged conflict of interest can damage an organisation's reputation, so conflicts of interest need to be managed carefully. This Standing Order is intended to protect both Councillors from accusations of bias, and the Union as a whole.
- 4.2 A conflict of interest is any situation in which the interests of an individual Councillor or the loyalty which they owe to another organisation or person, could influence, or appear to influence, the decision made by the Council in which they participate.
- 4.3 It shall not be considered to be a conflict of interest where a Councillor serves on the board of another organisation as an appointee of the Council.
- 4.4 A Councillor who believes that they have a conflict of interest shall declare that to the Council meeting before the item on the agenda over which they have a conflict is discussed. That declaration shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The

Councillor declaring the conflict of interest may stay in the meeting and both speak and vote.

- 4.5 Once a declaration of a conflict of interest has been made, it shall not be open for discussion by the Council.
- 4.6 A Councillor shall complete a Declaration of Interest form within three months of being elected to the Council.
- 4.7 If a Councillor fails to declare a conflict of interest, they may be open to a complaint and possible disciplinary action under Rule 28: Disciplinary Procedures.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIAL DURING COUNCIL MEETINGS

- 5.1 No material shall be circulated to the Council in the Council chamber without the prior permission of either the President or the General Secretary.

6. MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

- 6.1 **Frequency of meetings:** The first meeting of a new Council shall take place during the 14 days following the election and thereafter the Council shall meet as often as the Council considers necessary (Rule 16.1.3). From January to July, meetings of the Council shall normally be held on the third or fourth Tuesday of the month. Council meetings shall not normally be held in the month of August. From September to December, meetings of the Council shall normally be held on the first Tuesday of the month.
- 6.2 **Start and finish time:** The Council meeting shall normally start at 10.30am and close no later than 6pm. At 6pm, if business is not complete, and provided there is still a quorum, an extension of 30 minutes may be proposed and, if formally seconded, this will be put to the vote immediately and without discussion and, if agreed by a simple majority, then the meeting may continue for as long as necessary, but no later than 6.30pm. The lunch break shall normally be taken no later than 1.30pm.
- 6.3 **Quorum:** The quorum for meetings of the Council shall be 10 members (Rule 16.1.2).

7. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 7.1 Any clause of these Standing Orders, other than a Rule of the Union, may be suspended by a two-thirds majority vote of those Councillors present and voting for and against.

8. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ALL EQUITY MEETINGS

Members taking part in physical or on-line meetings or contributing to social media pages shall:

- 8.1 Treat fellow members with dignity and respect and in accordance with the objectives set out at Rule 3.1.1.8 of the Rules of the Union.
- 8.2 Avoid, or clearly explain, acronyms and technical jargon.
- 8.3 Not use discriminatory language.
- 8.4 Not behave in any way that contravenes the objectives at Rule 3.1.1.8 of the Rules of the Union.
- 8.5 Respect the confidentiality of discussions and disclosures.
- 8.6 Leave any personal disagreements outside the meeting.
- 8.7 Allow fellow members the opportunity to speak or comment, without interruption.
- 8.8 Keep to time and stick to the agenda.
- 8.9 Arrive prepared by reading all the relevant papers prior to the commencement of the meeting.
- 8.10 Respect decisions that have been reached and agreed to.
- 8.11 Refrain from making personal attacks.