

***COMHAIRLE CHONTAE  
SHLIGIGH***

***SLIGO COUNTY COUNCIL***

***STANDING ORDERS***

*(2<sup>nd</sup> November, 2020)*

***REGULATING THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETINGS OF THE  
COUNCIL***

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## *Standing Orders for Meetings of Sligo County Council*

We, the County Council of the County of Sligo, in pursuance of the power vested in us by Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by Section 57 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014, and of every other power hereunto enabling hereby make the undermentioned Standing Orders for the regulation of the Council's proceedings and business.

### **Definitions**

In these Orders "Council" means the County Council for the Administrative County of Sligo.

"Councillor" means a person elected or chosen to fill the office of Councillor for the Administrative County of Sligo.

"Cathaoirleach" means a Chairperson who shall be elected and hold office in accordance with Part 5 (Section 31) of the Local Government Act, 2001, *amended* by Schedule 1 Part 1 of the Local Government Reform Act 2014

The "Chief Executive" means the Chief Executive for the Administrative County of Sligo for the purposes of Section 54 of the Local Government reform Act 2014, or in his absence such other person as is duly authorised to act for him/her.

The "Meetings Administrator" means an officer or other such person acting for him/her who has been assigned the duties of meetings administration.

The "Director of Services" means an officer or other such officer acting for him/her with responsibility for a programme or programmes of works.

The word "month" when used in Resolutions, Standing Orders and Regulations of the Council shall be deemed to mean a calendar month.

"A Point of Order" shall be a question dealing only with the conduct of procedure of a debate.

In the computation of a number of clear days, both of the terminal days are to be excluded. In counting clear days where the number of days notice does not exceed seven, Sundays and Christmas day are not to be included in the computation. If the notice exceeds seven days, Sundays and Christmas Day are to be reckoned.

### **Ordinary Meetings of the Council**

1. Unless upon any occasion when it is otherwise fixed by statute or by resolution of the Council, Ordinary Meetings of the Council shall be held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each of the months January – December excluding August, except where the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday is a Bank Holiday where the meeting shall be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday.

### **Annual Meeting**

2. In accordance with Paragraph 4, Section 10 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by Section 57 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014, In every year in

which a local election is held the Annual Meeting shall be held on the fourteenth day after the polling day or, where the poll is for any reason countermanded, interrupted or adjourned, after the day on which the poll is completed or the fresh poll is held.

Where the fourteenth day is an excluded day the meeting shall be held on the next following day which is not an excluded day.

In every other year the Annual Meeting shall be on such day within the period 14 days either side of the anniversary of the first Annual Meeting.

Whenever an Annual Meeting is for any reason not held on the appointed day the meetings administrator shall, following consultation with the Cathaoirleach, or if the office of Cathaoirleach is vacant or he / she is unable to act, with the Leas-Cathaoirleach, convene a meeting for a day which the administrator considers to be the earliest convenient date for that purpose.

In an election year Sligo County Council publish a notice of its Annual Meeting in at least one newspaper circulating in its administrative area. The notice shall state the date of the Annual Meeting and where appropriate that the first business of the meeting will be the election of the Cathaoirleach, and specify the joint bodies and other bodies to which the local authority is entitled to make appointments at that meeting or subsequently. The notice shall be in a form and published within the period prescribed by regulations.

At an Annual Meeting in an election year the meetings administrator shall read out the names of persons duly elected as members of Sligo County Council. Subject to this, the election of a Cathaoirleach is to be the first business of an Annual Meeting and the next business, the election of a Leas-Cathaoirleach.

In the case of the Annual Meeting in an election year the business to be transacted after the election of the Cathaoirleach and the Leas-Cathaoirleach shall include the consideration of the election, appointment or nomination of members of joint bodies or other bodies elected, appointed or nominated by Sligo County Council

### **Budget Meeting**

3. The Budget Meeting shall be held during the period prescribed by regulations for that purpose.

### **Special Meeting**

4. In accordance with Section 44 and Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2001, as updated by Part 3 of Local Government Reform Act, 2014, A Special Meeting of the Council may be convened at any time by the Cathaoirleach or if the office of Cathaoirleach is vacant or the Cathaoirleach is unable to act, by the Leas-Cathaoirleach, on foot of a request in writing presented to him or her by any five Councillors.

Where the Cathaoirleach refuses or neglects to act on foot of a request within 7 days of it being presented to him/her, the Councillor making the request may convene a meeting. The provisions of paragraph 6 of schedule 10 of the Local Government Act, 2001 apply in relation to calling of such meeting.

## **Hour of Meeting**

5. The hour of meeting of the Council shall be at 10 a.m. or at such other hour as may from time to time be fixed by resolution of the Council, meetings starting at 10 a.m. to finish by 5.00pm.

## **Place of Meeting and Address of Principal Offices**

6. In so far as practicable the place for holding meetings of the Council shall be the principal offices at County Hall and meetings shall normally be held there, provided that the Council may from time to time by resolution appoint an alternative location for a particular meeting.

In the event that it is not practicable to hold the meeting at the principal offices, the Cathaoirleach may, in exceptional circumstances, determine the venue for the meeting. This facility will also apply to the Chairs of the Municipal Districts.

The address of the principal offices for the purposes of these Standing Orders is County Hall, Riverside, Sligo.

## **Summoning of Meeting**

7. A notification to attend a meeting, other than a budget meeting shall (a) be sent or delivered or transmitted by electronic mail to each Councillor, (b) specify the place, date and time of the meeting, and (c) give not less than 3 clear days notice. The 3 clear days shall only exclude (i) normal day for receipt of the notice, and (ii) the day of the meeting.

Meeting agenda and associated documentation will be transmitted to Councilors by electronic means, including email and extranet facility, with the exception of documents for the budget meeting.

A notification shall include or be accompanied by an Agenda listing the business to be transacted at the meeting. Subject to Standing Order 20 no business shall be transacted at a meeting other than that specified in the Agenda which relates to the meeting or business required by the Act, or otherwise by law to be transacted at the meeting.

An Agenda which has been sent or delivered for this purpose may be altered (whether by way of addition, deletion or otherwise) if an Agenda specifying the alteration is delivered or sent to each Councillor not less than 3 clear days before the day on which the meeting is to be held.

In the case of a Special Meeting convened by requisition under Standing Order 4, a copy of the requisition shall be sent with the notification.

8. A notification shall have the signature of the meetings administrator and any document claiming to have that signature shall be deemed, until the contrary is proved to have been duly issued or given with the authority of the local authority.

Want of service or non-receipt of a notification by any Councillor or lack of a signature or any other defect in the notification does not affect the validity of a meeting or of any act or thing done at the meeting.

For the purposes of this Standing Order "signature" includes a facsimile of a signature by

whatever process reproduced or a printed version of the name of the meetings administrator.

## **Public Notice of Meeting**

9. Public notice of the place, date and time of a meeting other than Sligo County Council's budget meeting shall be displayed not less than three clear days before the day of the meeting in or at its principal offices at County Hall, Riverside.

The Notice will include the Agenda for the meeting or specify a place where the Agenda can be inspected and in the case of a meeting requisitioned under Standing Order no. 4 the Agenda shall include or be accompanied by a copy of the requisition.

Subject to any arrangements as it may make, the Council will supply a copy of a public notice and agenda to the media.

## **Constitution of Meetings**

10. The Chair shall be taken by the Cathaoirleach at a meeting of the Council within 30 minutes after the time appointed for such meeting or in his / her absence by the Leas-Cathaoirleach or otherwise by a Councillor called thereto by general agreement or chosen by vote of the Councillors present to chair the meeting and such Councillor shall leave the chair on the arrival at the meeting of the Cathaoirleach or Leas-Cathaoirleach.
11. The names of the Councillors present shall be recorded in a register held for that purpose.

## **Quorum**

12. The quorum for meetings of Sligo County Council is six

Whenever a meeting of the Council is abandoned owing to failure to obtain a quorum the names of those present at the time and place appointed for such meeting shall be recorded by the meetings administrator and they shall for all purposes be deemed to have attended a duly constituted meeting.

If a quorum is not present within thirty minutes after the time fixed for the meeting (or at any time during the meeting), the meeting shall stand adjourned to a day to be named by the Cathaoirleach.

## **Order of Business**

13. The Order of Business at all meetings other than Annual Meetings, Local Authority Budget Meetings and Special Meetings shall, subject to the provisions of any enactments, be as follows:
  - (i) Confirmation of Minutes;
  - (ii) Business prescribed by Statute, Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Council for transaction at such meeting;
  - (iii) Consideration of reports and recommendations by Executive;
  - (iv) Other business set forth in the Notice convening the meeting including business submitted by the Chief Executive;
  - (v) Notices of Motion in the order in which they have been received;
  - (vi) Correspondence;

- (vii) Matters arising (an item can be raised under this heading only by the Councillor who proposed the resolution in relation to it at the original meeting);
- (viii) Any other business;

In the case of a meeting convened for a special purpose the business specified in the Notification for such meeting shall be transacted and no other business.

At any ordinary meeting of the Council it shall be proper, if a majority of the Councillors present and voting so decide, to take an item for consideration out of the sequence of listing on the Agenda, provided always that such decision shall not affect any business required by Statute to be done before any other business at the meeting.

## **Presentations**

14. Presentations by outside agencies or individuals shall be confined to one presentation per meeting, the position of said presentation on the agenda to be decided by prior consultation with the Cathaoirleach. The presentation shall not exceed ten minutes in duration except in exceptional circumstances with the permission of the Cathaoirleach.

## **Minutes**

15. Minutes of the proceedings of a meeting of the Council shall be drawn up by the meetings administrator.

The Minutes shall include -

- (a) the date, place and time of the meeting,
- (b) the names of the Councillors present at the meeting,
- (c) the names of the senior employees present at the meeting,
- (d) reference to any report submitted to the Councillors at the meeting, decisions of the Council in relation to all motions, reports and recommendations submitted,
- (e) where there is a roll call vote, the number and names of Councillors voting for and against the motion and of those abstaining,
- (f) particulars of all resolutions passed at the meeting,
- (g) such other matters considered appropriate.

A copy of the minutes of a meeting shall be sent or given or transmitted by e-mail, or posted on the extranet, by the meetings administrator.

A copy of the minutes shall be provided to any person applying for them on payment of such reasonable sum, being a sum not exceeding the reasonable cost of supplying the copy, as may be fixed by the Council.

## **Notice of Motions**

16. Every Notice of Motion dated and signed by the Councillor(s) giving it shall be delivered to the meetings administrator or transmitted by electronic mail to the dedicated email address and shall be recorded in the order of their receipt.

Only those Notice of Motions which have been received not later than 5.00 p.m. on the seventh day before the relevant meeting of the Council shall appear on the Agenda for that meeting. Where the 7<sup>th</sup> day before the relevant meeting is a Bank Holiday, 5.00 p.m. on the previous working day shall apply.

Notice of Motions shall appear on the Agenda paper in the order in which they are

received by the Meetings Administrator provided always that all motions relating to the statutory functions of the Council shall appear on the Agenda paper before motions dealing with matters which do not relate to statutory functions of the Council.

17. The Agenda shall not contain any motion which has been considered within the previous six months or any motion substantially similar to any motion considered within the previous six months. Any decision on what constitutes a substantially similar motion shall be decided upon by the Cathaoirleach.

A motion listed for consideration (or an amendment) before being considered by the Council shall be committed to in writing, signed by the Councillor proposing it and by the Councillor seconding it and handed to the Cathaoirleach.

Where any Notice of Motion is obviously out of order, illegal or contains unbecoming expressions, such a Notice of Motion shall be referred by the Meetings Administrator to the Cathaoirleach or Leas-Cathaoirleach.

Multiple Notice of Motions i.e. Motions which relate to more than one topic are prohibited. The decision of the Cathaoirleach or Leas-Cathaoirleach in such instances shall be final and binding.

18. No Councillor shall be permitted to have more than three motions on the Agenda for any one meeting with the exception of motions adjourned from a previous meeting. The maximum number of deferred motions per member shall be three.

### **Motions to Amend or Revoke Resolutions**

19. A motion to revoke or amend a resolution of the Council can only be made on notice inserted in the Agenda, and such notice shall specify the resolution to be revoked or amended and furnish the terms of the motion to be made; but no such motion shall be allowed to appear on the Agenda to revoke or amend any resolution or substantially similar resolution of Council within six months of the date of the adoption of such resolution except with the written assent of not less than six Councillors. A resolution may not be revoked at the meeting at which it has been adopted.

It shall be necessary for adoption of a motion to revoke or amend a resolution of the Council that not less than one-half of the total number of Councillors vote in favour and subject to such other requirements as may be specified in Standing Orders and to any statutory requirements. This Standing Order dealing with revocation of resolutions cannot be suspended.

A resolution shall not be revoked where the original resolution was for the purpose of carrying out a statutory obligation or where the original resolution has been acted upon so as to involve the Council in a legal obligation or commitment.

20. Subject to Standing Order 18 any matter decided by the local authority by motion on notice or on the report of a committee shall not be re-opened within 6 months of the date of such decision.

### **Motion for Purpose of Dealing with Urgent Business**

21. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Standing Orders a motion may be proposed without notice for the purpose of discussing urgent business related to a



function of the local authority, subject to the requirement that not less than one-half of the total number of Councillors vote in favour. The making of a statutory decision will require Notice to be given in accordance with Standing Orders. This Standing Order, dealing with urgent business, cannot be suspended.

## **Adjournment of Council**

22. A motion for adjournment of the Council may be made at any time and shall be determined without amendment and without debate, except that the mover of the Motion of adjournment and the mover of the Motion immediately affected by it, may each address the Council for not more than five minutes on the question of the adjournment; and when the Motion for adjournment is adopted, the meeting will stand adjourned to a day then named or in the event of no such date being named, to the next occurring ordinary meeting.

Adjournment of the Council for the purposes of expressing sympathy will be for the duration of 15 minutes after which time the meeting will reconvene. The only exceptions to this rule will be in the event of the death of a member or former member of Sligo County Council.

A Special Meeting may be adjourned from time to time until its business is concluded.

## **Motions and Amendments**

23. A motion, notice of which stands in the Agenda and which has been proposed and seconded, may be withdrawn only on leave obtained from a majority of the Council present at the meeting at the request of the Councillor concerned.
24. A motion may either be proposed by the Councillor in whose name it stands or if he or she be absent, by any Councillor authorised by him or her to propose it on his or her behalf, but unless so proposed, and in the absence of a request from the Councillor in whose name it stands to defer it, the motion shall be dropped and shall not again be set down in the Notice Paper except on fresh notice. A motion or an amendment when not seconded is dropped.
25. An amendment which has been proposed and seconded may be withdrawn only on leave obtained from a majority of the Councillors present at the meeting at the request of the Councillor concerned.
26. Every amendment shall be relevant to the motion on which it is moved and shall be either (a) to leave out words, (b) to leave out words and insert or add others, (c) to insert or add words. An amendment shall not be in order if it is equivalent to a direct negative or if it is not in fact an amendment of the motion it purports to amend.

When an amendment is moved to an original motion it shall be discussed and decided upon before any further discussion takes place on the original motion to which the amendment relates.

27. Whenever an amendment on an original motion has been moved and seconded, no second or subsequent amendment shall be moved until the first amendment shall have been disposed of, but notice of any second or subsequent amendment shall first have been given.
28. When an amendment is affirmed the original motion as amended becomes the substantive

motion upon which any further amendment, of which notice has been given, may be moved.

29. When an amendment is lost any further amendment, of which notice has been given, may be proposed, but only one amendment shall be at any time before the meeting and an amendment shall not be in order if the Cathaoirleach rules it to be substantially the same as an amendment already lost.

## **Rules of Debate**

30. Except with the permission of the Cathaoirleach no Councillor shall address the Council for more than five minutes. A Councillor may speak once upon any item on the Agenda or on any motion except a motion which is to be put without debate.
31. The proposer of a motion has the right to reply whilst the motion remains before the Cathaoirleach and when the proposer replies the debate on the motion is closed.
32. A Councillor may speak more than once on the same motion or amendment for the purpose only of submitting a point of order or making a personal explanation. The Cathaoirleach's decision in determining a point of order or personal explanation shall be final.
33. The Cathaoirleach shall ascertain that a motion is seconded before the proposer is permitted to speak to it.
34. A motion "that the Council proceed to the next business" may be made after any motion has been proposed and seconded. When made it shall be determined without amendment or debate and if it be affirmed the business interrupted by such motion shall not be proceeded with further at that meeting and, unless the Council otherwise determine, shall be adjourned to the next ordinary meeting. The motion to proceed to next business shall not be made more than once during the debate on any question.
35. At any time during a discussion on a motion a Councillor may move "that the question be now put" and if such leave be given by the assent of the majority of those present and voting, the motion shall be put, subject to the right of reply by the proposer of the original or substantive motion.
36. When two or more Councillors at the same time offer to speak, the Councillor called upon by the Cathaoirleach shall have precedence.
37. A Councillor while speaking shall address only the Cathaoirleach.
38. A Councillor speaking shall not be interrupted except upon a question of order, but may give way to a Councillor desiring to make a personal explanation.
39. When a Councillor seeks to make a point of order, the Councillor then addressing the Cathaoirleach shall give way until the question of order has been determined by the Cathaoirleach, unless the former seeks to address the Cathaoirleach upon the question of order.

## **Conduct at Meetings**

40. In accordance with Paragraph 13 of Schedule 10 of the of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended by Schedule 3 of the Local Government Reform Act,2014, The

Cathaoirleach is the sole judge of order in the Council and has authority to maintain order and enforce prompt obedience to his / her ruling. Council meetings shall be carried out in a dignified manner and in an atmosphere of respect for all concerned.

### **Disorderly, etc behaviour**

- 41.** If at a meeting any member, in the opinion of the Chair notified to the members, misconducts himself or herself by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair, or by wilfully obstructing the business of the meeting, the Chair or any other member may move “That the member named be not further heard”, and the motion if seconded shall be put and determined without discussion.
- 42.** If in the opinion of the Chair any member has been or is disorderly by persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair, or by behaving irregularly, improperly or offensively or by otherwise obstructing the business of the meeting, and the Chair has conveyed his or her opinion to the members present by naming the member concerned, then the Chair or any member may move “that the member named leave the meeting” and the motion, if seconded, shall be put and determined without discussion.
- 43.** Where members decide that a member leave a meeting, that member shall immediately leave the meeting and shall not be entitled to speak or to take any further part in that meeting on that day.
- 44.** Where in the opinion of the Chair there is general disorder which impedes the orderly transaction of business or where a member against whom it was resolved in accordance with SO 42 that he or she leave the meeting refuses to do so, the Chair may adjourn the meeting for such period as he or she considers necessary in the interests of order.
  - 44A.** Where following a motion under SO 41 the member refuses to leave the meeting, and the meeting is adjourned under SO 43, a further motion may be put that the member concerned was the cause of the meeting being adjourned.
  - 44B.** If following a motion under SO 43A, the chair expresses the further opinion that the member has continued to
    - be disorderly by disregarding the ruling of the chair, or
    - behave irregularly, improperly or offensively, or
    - otherwise obstruct the business of the meeting, andthe chair expresses this opinion to the members present by again naming the member concerned, then the Chair or any member may move “that the member named be suspended for [a specified period]” and the motion, if seconded, shall be put and determined without discussion. The period specified in this motion shall be not less than one month and not more than 6 weeks.
  - 44C.** Where at least two-thirds of the elected members present and voting decide that the member be suspended, he/she shall be suspended with immediate effect from all meetings of the Council and any committee of the Council, for the period specified in the motion.
  - 44D.** If within 3 months of the end a period of suspension, where at least two-thirds of the elected members present and voting decide that the member concerned has again, or continued to
    - be disorderly by disregarding the ruling of the chair, or

- behave irregularly, improperly or offensively, or
  - otherwise obstruct the business of the meeting,  
on the basis of a motion moved by the Chair or any member “that the member named be suspended for [a specified period]” in accordance with SO 43B, and the motion, if seconded, shall be put and determined without discussion, he or she shall be again suspended with immediate effect from all meetings of the Council and any committee of the Council, for a period of at least three months, but not exceeding six months.
- 44E.** Notwithstanding, SOs 43A to 43D, the Council members may at any meeting subsequent to the imposition of the suspension, and during the period of suspension, decide by resolution to lift a suspension. Such resolution, whether under SO15 or SO 20 shall be considered at the earliest point on the agenda possible, subject to the requirement under any enactment in relation to other specified business.
- 44F.** The chair shall indicate to the meeting that the chief executive has sought consultations on arrangements for the exclusion, or where necessary, removal from the meeting, of any member the subject of a motion under this part of the SOs. This shall be as a point of information only and there shall be no debate on this information.
- 45.** No member shall address the Chair, unless from one of the seats reserved to the use of members.

## Deputations

- 46.** The Council may by resolution decide to receive a deputation. Subject to the direction of the Cathaoirleach two persons may speak on behalf of the deputation for not more than ten minutes in all.

A request for a deputation to be heard by the Council shall not be considered unless the subject matter to be raised be notified in writing on the motion of a member of the Council, or direct application by the body concerned, sent to the meetings administrator at least seven clear days before the date of the meeting.

The Council may, by resolution, decide to receive a deputation without notice, provided at least one-half of the Councillors present vote for the resolution.

The deputation may submit questions and be questioned by Councillors but shall not be entitled to ask questions or take part in any debate.

When the members of a deputation have addressed the meeting, they shall withdraw from the meeting, without prejudice to the general right of public attendance.

No discussion of the matter which is raised by the deputation shall take place until after the deputation has withdrawn from the meeting.

Requests for deputations which have local implications and which are more appropriately dealt with at local level shall following consultation with the Cathaoirleach be placed on the Agenda of the next meeting of the relevant Municipal District

Any persons mis-conducting themselves or interrupting the proceedings may be removed

on the direction of the Cathaoirleach.

Members of the public shall be required to remain silent and observe any direction given by the Cathaoirleach.

## **Questions, Votes and Divisions**

**47.** Voting may be:-

1. By voice where it is obvious that the meeting is unanimous with no Councillor dissenting.
2. By a division, i.e. a regular count of the Councillors for or against the motion (or amendment)
3. By a division by electronic means.
4. When a roll-call is being taken Councillors shall vote in alphabetical order of their surnames. Where surnames are identical regard shall be had to alphabetical order of christian names.

**48.** Where the Cathaoirleach has not formally declared the result of a vote, or is in doubt as to whether his / her declaration is right or wrong, s/he is entitled if s/he thinks fit to take a second vote on the matter, especially if s/he considers that through some misunderstanding the first vote did not properly represent the sense of the meeting at that time.

**49.** Each Councillor present at a meeting of the Council shall have a vote unless prohibited by any enactment.

Where there is an equality of votes, the Cathaoirleach, except where otherwise provided by law shall have a second or casting vote.

**50.** Without prejudice to any enactment or other provisions of these Standing Orders requiring either the presence of a specified number or proportion of the Councillors or that a specified number or proportion should vote in favour for the doing of any particular act, all acts of the Council which are reserved functions or questions duly coming or arising before a meeting of the Council shall be determined - (a) by a majority of the Councillors present and voting or where there is an equality of votes, by a second or casting vote of the Cathaoirleach (which person shall have and may choose to exercise such a vote).

Standing Orders 46 - 49 cannot be suspended.

## **Attendance of Public and Media**

**51.** Members of the public and representatives of the media are entitled to attend Council meetings. To that end, media outlets will receive notification of meetings including the agenda and where possible, pertinent reports.

Where the Council is of opinion that the absence of members of the public and representatives of the media from the whole or part of a particular meeting is desirable because of the special nature of the meeting or of an item of business to be or about to be considered at the meeting or for other special reasons, the Council may, by resolution, in respect of which at least one-half of the total number of Councillors vote in favour, decide to meet in committee for the whole or part of the meeting concerned.

The resolution in this instance shall indicate in a general way the reasons for the

resolution and those reasons shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

- 52.** Members of the public and representatives of the media will occupy the parts of the Meeting Room allotted to their use.

The right of the public and the media to attend Council meetings shall be regulated taking into consideration available space and observance of rules governing conduct.

- 53.** Members of the public shall be seated and maintain silence and observe any directions given by the Cathaoirleach or by any employee in attendance upon the Council. Such employees are responsible for the execution of all measures necessary for the maintenance of order and decorum in and about the Chamber.

If a member of the public interrupts a meeting at any time or endeavours, without the permission of the Council to address a Meeting, the Cathaoirleach shall warn him or her and if the interruption continues shall order that person's removal.

In the case of a general disturbance in any part of the Meeting Room open to the public, the Cathaoirleach shall order that part to be cleared.

- 54.** While the Council may make arrangements for the broadcasting or webcasting of its meetings, no external recording, broadcasting or photography arrangements will be facilitated without the prior approval of the Council.

- 55.** The use of mobile phones shall not be permitted at meetings of the Council.

## **COMMITTEES**

### **Strategic Policy Committees**

- 56.** Sligo County Council's Strategic Policy Scheme was adopted at its meeting on 1st December 2014.

**57. Role and Objectives**

The SPC system is intended to give Councillors and relevant sectoral interests an opportunity for full involvement in the policy making process

The primary role of the SPC, as a Committee of the Council, is to consider matters connected with the formulation, development, monitoring and review of policy which relate to the functions of the Council and advise the Council on those matters.

The work of the SPC will be supported by the relevant Director of Services and their staff. The SPC chair and Director of Services will work together to focus the work of the SPC on relevant policy issues through the organisation of agendas, identification of strategic issues, supply of reports and necessary background material to inform the SPC.

**58. Structure and composition**

The structure of Sligo County Council's Strategic Policy Committees is as follows:

SPC 1 - Housing & Corporate  
SPC2 - Environment & Infrastructure

SPC 3 - Planning, Community & Economic Development, Arts & Culture  
SPC 4 - Climate Change

Each SPC must have as a minimum total membership of nine, and one-third of membership must be drawn from sectoral interests. The appointment of sectoral interests to the SPC is a reserved function.

The composition of the SPC's is:

SPC 1 - 6 elected members 4 nominees from sectoral interests

SPC 2 - 6 elected members 4 nominees from sectoral interests

SPC 3 - 8 elected members and 5 nominees from sectoral interests

SPC 4 - 6 elected members and 4 nominees from sectoral interests

## **59. Chair and membership**

The chairs are appointed by the full council for a minimum period of three years, which may be renewed by the Council or they may hold the position for the lifetime of the Council.

Membership of the SPCs, both councillors and sectoral representatives, shall be for the lifetime of the Council. Casual vacancies which arise will be filled by the sector involved. Nominating bodies may also de-select their nominees.

## **60. Quorum**

The quorum for meetings of SPC 1 is four members

The quorum for meetings of SPC 2 is three members

The quorum for meetings of SPC 3 is five members

The quorum for meetings of SPC 4 is four members

The SPC Meetings Administrator to provide for the attendance of two elected representatives and one sectoral representative when determining the meeting quorum

Each member of Sligo County Council should, as a matter of equity and good practice be a member of at least one SPC.

Councillors may not be nominated to represent sectoral interests.

SPC Membership for Councillors should be for the lifetime of the Council.

A person ceasing to be a Councillor would automatically cease membership of the SPC.

A councillor should not serve on more than two SPCs insofar as possible.

SPC councillor membership should reflect the proportionality and the distribution of elected representation on the full council. It is also important that the SPC membership should, as far as it is practical, be representative of each of the municipal districts in the local authority.

Sligo County Council respects the requirements for Gender Balance in relation to the formulation of the SPCs and in so far as possible will ensure that this occurs in the nomination of members of the Council to the SPCs.

The allocation of SPC chairs should also reflect equitably the spread of elected representation on the council, including, as far as it is practical, be representative of each of the municipal districts in the local authority.

#### **61. Operation and administration**

A calendar of SPC meetings should be agreed at the start of each year. They will meet as frequently as necessary and at least once every quarter. Each SPC will arrange its own business and proceedings, including the fixing of dates, times and venues of meetings.

The SPC Chair and relevant Director of Services should meet well in advance of an SPC meeting to clarify the agenda for the forthcoming meeting and to agree on objectives and what they would like as expected outcomes.

SPC meeting documentation will be circulated to SPC members two weeks in advance of meetings, and additionally, agenda and minutes should be circulated to SPC members and other councillors in a county council area.

The Chief Executive is required to advise and assist the SPC generally with regard to the performance of the functions of the SPC, including when requested to do so by the SPC members. Normally, where the views expressed at the SPC meeting require the particular attention of the Chief Executive, the SPC Chair will identify these for the Director of Services for onward transmission to the Chief Executive and other local authority staff as appropriate.

### **Corporate Policy Group**

- 62.** Under Section 133 of the Local Government Act, 2001m as amended by Section 48 of the Local Government Reform Act, 2014, the Cathaoirleach of the Council and the Chairpersons of the Strategic Policy Committees shall form the Corporate Policy Group, which shall meet as often as required under the chairmanship of the Cathaoirleach and shall provide a forum for discussion of policy affecting the whole Council.

The Policy Group shall include a member of each Municipal District. If at any time this is not the case, a member of the Municipal District concerned shall be selected by the members of the relevant Municipal District to be a member of the Policy Group. Failing such selection, the Cathaoirleach of the Municipal District concerned or such other member as the Cathaoirleach may select shall be a member of the Policy Group.”

### **Committees – General**

- 63.** The Council may appoint a Special Committee for a specific purpose. When appointing such a Committee it shall at the same time determine the number and names of members to constitute such Committee and shall also fix the quorum which shall not be less than three. The term of office of a Special Committee shall be for such period as the Council may determine when appointing the Committee.

- 64.** Every Special Committee at its first meeting shall appoint a Chairperson from its members and, where practical, fix the day and the hour of future meetings.

- 65.** In the election of Committees, candidates shall be proposed and seconded and if the number so proposed and seconded does not exceed the number of vacancies, those



proposed and seconded shall be declared elected. Should the number of those proposed and seconded exceed the number of vacancies, a vote shall be taken, and the procedures shall be as follows:

Where the number of candidates nominated exceeds by one the number of vacancies to be filled, the candidate who has received the lowest number of votes shall be eliminated and the remaining candidates shall be declared elected.

Where the number of candidates or continuing candidates exceeds by two or more the number of vacancies to be filled, the candidate who has received the lowest number of votes shall be eliminated and a vote shall be taken as between the continuing candidates. Every candidate shall be entitled to vote for a number of candidates not exceeding the number of vacancies. This procedure shall be repeated as often as is necessary.

Notwithstanding anything contained above, the provisions of paragraph 18 of schedule 10 of the Local Government Act, 2001, and the requirements of any other enactment will apply to appointments to committees.

- 66.** Whenever a vacancy occurs in the membership of any Committee of the Council, by reason of the death, resignation or disqualification of a member, such vacancy shall be filled as soon as circumstances permit, by the Council after due notice.
- 67.** In a Committee, a motion or amendment may be proposed without a seconder, and a member may speak more than once to any question, but otherwise the Rules of Order of the Council, so far as they are conveniently applicable, shall govern all proceedings of Committees, and the Councillor in the Chair at any meeting of a Committee shall determine questions of order.
- 68.** Every Committee in the whole of its proceedings shall unless otherwise provided for be governed by the Standing Orders or Resolutions of the Council affecting such Committee.
- 69.** A copy of every Report of a Committee to be submitted to the Council shall, before the submission thereof, be transmitted to every member of the Council at least three days before Council Meetings, save in cases of urgency when reading of the Report to Council shall suffice.
- 70.** Save for meetings of the Corporate Policy Group and such other Committees as the local authority may specify from time to time, representatives of the media and the public may be present at meetings of Committees of the Council.
- 71.** When confidential matters are under discussion, Committees may decide to exclude such representatives from the meeting or the relevant portion of the meeting.
- 72.** The meetings administrator shall summon a meeting of any Committee at the request of the Cathaoirleach of the Committee, or any three of its members, or whenever the meetings administrator deems it necessary in special circumstances that such Committee shall meet.
- 73.** The Cathaoirleach of the Council shall be ex-officio a member of every Committee and every Sub-Committee except those where membership is fixed by Statute.
- 74.** In the absence of the Cathaoirleach, the Chair shall be taken by any Council member of

the Committee agreed at the meeting.

75. The Chair of each Committee shall be responsible to the Council for the general management of the business entrusted to such Committee.
76. Committees may appoint Sub-Committees from their number to facilitate the transaction of business, who shall report to the Committee, but such Sub-Committee shall not have the power to transact any business without express authority from the Committee.
77. The Council may resolve itself into a Committee of the whole Council for the transaction of business to be specified in the Resolution.
78. The decisions of the Committees of the Council shall not become binding, except where otherwise provided in the Standing Orders, until approved by the Council, unless the Council specifically empowers these Committees to deal (without further reference to it) with certain matters, subject to the appropriate legal provisions.
79. A Committee may by majority decision decide that an item be put forward for consideration of the Council at the next Ordinary Meeting applying.

### **Suspension of Standing Orders**

80. Subject to the provisions and requirements of the Act, or of any other enactment, any Standing Order, except Nos. 18, 20, 46 to 49 may at any time be suspended on a motion proposed without notice for the purpose of enabling any specific business defined in the suspensory motion to be considered and dealt with by the Council, subject to the requirement that at least two-thirds of the members present vote in favour.

### **Casual Vacancy**

81. A casual vacancy shall be filled in accordance with Section 19 of the Local Government Act, 2001.

Where the person causing the casual vacancy was a member of Registered Political Party at the time of his or her election or co-option the casual vacancy shall be filled by the co-option by the local Authority of a person to fill the vacancy subject to such person being nominated by the same Registered Political Party as the councillor who caused the casual vacancy.

Where the person causing the casual vacancy was a non-party candidate at his or her election or co-option to Sligo County Council, the vacancy shall be filled by the co-option by the local authority of a person to fill the vacancy. The person proposed for co-option shall be selected in the following manner:-

- (a) A non-party councillor may furnish the Meetings Administrator with a sealed envelope containing a list of nominee(s) in order of preference who are available and willing to fill any casual vacancy caused by him or her. The envelope shall be maintained in the custody of the Meetings Administrator and may from time to time be updated by the furnishing of a replacement envelope to the Meetings Administrator containing a revised list. The nomination(s) shall have effect from the date of receipt of the envelope by the Meetings Administrator and the envelope last received prior to the occurrence of the casual vacancy shall be applicable. The person proposed for co-option to fill

the casual vacancy shall be the first available person so nominated in the order of preference appearing on the list of nominee(s) contained in the said envelope.

- (b) In the event of the non-party Councillor failing to submit such nomination(s) or any of the nominee(s) refusing to accept such nomination(s) or being otherwise unavailable, the vacancy shall be filled by resolution of the Council from amongst the candidates proposed and seconded by the councillors at their discretion.

### **Miscellaneous**

- 82.** A Councillor or Councillors appointed to outside bodies and boards may from time to time submit reports to the Council on matters arising in such bodies or boards which have relevance to the Council and shall in any event do so in accordance with the requirements of Section 141, Local Government Act, 2001.
- 83.** Sligo County Council may, by resolution, for which at least one half of the total number of members vote in favour, amend or revoke Standing Orders and make new Standing Orders.

### **Seal of the Council**

- 84.** The Common Seal of the Council shall be in the custody of the Meetings Administrator and secured by lock, the key of which shall also be in the custody of the Meetings Administrator.
- 85.** The Official Seal of the Council shall be affixed by the Chief Executive or his/her delegated employee to deeds and documents requiring to be sealed in the presence of the Cathaoirleach or any nominated employee for that purpose by the Council.

### **Revocation and Commencement**

These Standing Orders shall come into operation on the **2nd November, 2020** and all Standing Orders previously made by the Council in respect of Council meetings and not already revoked shall be revoked with effect from that date.

Made under the Official Seal of the County Council of the County of Sligo

this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of November, 2020

Present when the Common Seal of the Council was affixed.

**Cllr. Dara Mulvey**

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**Cathaoirleach of the Council**

**Ciarán Hayes**

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**Chief Executive**

**Kevin Colreavy**

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**Meetings Administrator**