

GURNARD PARISH COUNCIL

POLICY ON DEBATE AND VOTING AT MEETINGS

The Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12 para 39(1) explains that:

"Every decision, save to appoint a Freeman, must be made by a majority of the members present and voting. Provided that a quorum is present it is immaterial that a quorum of members take part in the voting. A motion may therefore be carried by a single voter if nobody votes against him. The person presiding (Chairman) may vote even if by doing so he creates an equality of votes, and if there is an equality of votes he has a second or casting vote"

All Members should be aware that:

- Formal resolutions must be proposed and seconded before they can be voted upon or the resolution is defeated
- The opportunity to vote and comment, both individually and corporately, is a privilege which should be valued accordingly, and therefore a decision to abstain should not be taken lightly
- Resolutions, once proposed and seconded, will be voted upon by a show on hands either "in favour", "against" or "abstention"
- The final majority of the votes made will be taken from those Members **who vote "for" or "against" NOT from all those present.**
- Resolutions made are corporate decisions made by the Council, not by one or other Member

Without prejudice to what is required by statute, Gurnard Parish Council agrees to adopt the following policy and procedures with respect to the manner in which its members (whether elected or co-opted) participate in debate and vote on decisions and/or resolutions at all Full Council and Committee meetings:

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The Chair

- Will introduce the agenda item, and confirm/explain from the agenda what the desired outcome is (ie: a decision, to note, for information only etc.)
- Will allow enough time for debate and not accept any proposal until he/she draws the debate process to a close
- Will, where and when appropriate, ask for a proposal and, once it has been made, summarise the proposal for clarity and will only allow one proposal at a time to be tabled
- Will ask for a seconder to the proposal
- Must, if there is no seconder, declare the proposal defeated
- Must, if there is a seconder, ask for a show of hands in support of the proposal
- Must ask for a show of hands opposing the proposal
- Must ask for a show of hands from those who are abstaining from the vote
- Will declare the result of the vote (in consultation with the Clerk if necessary)

The Council or Committee Members

- Will contribute to the debate process only after the Chair has introduced the agenda item and invited comments and opinions from Members
- Will **always** direct comments during the debate **through the Chair** and will not speak until individually invited to by the Chair
- Will NOT make a resolution proposal until invited to by the Chair
- Will vote either “for”, “against” or “abstain” when requested to by the Chair by a show of hands
- Will make the show of hands clearly visible to allow the Chair and Clerk sufficient time to ensure an accurate count
- Will support the resolution arrived at **as the Corporate Body**

ADOPTED BY GURNARD PARISH COUNCIL 14th APRIL 2009