

Annual Parish Meetings

Introduction

1. The law in respect of Annual Parish Meetings is set out in sections 9 and 13 and Part III of Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972.
2. An Annual Parish Meeting consists of the local government electors of a parish and the purpose of the meeting is to discuss parish affairs.
3. An Annual Parish Meeting is an effective forum for parish councils to engage with the local electorate. Even if the Parish Council disagrees with the issues raised, or related arguments, the council members' attendance and involvement in the Annual Parish Meeting would demonstrate that the council is prepared to take account of local residents' views, which they must hold strongly if they have gone to the trouble attend the Annual Parish Meeting in the first place.

Convening an Annual Parish Meeting

4. An Annual Parish Meeting will be convened by the Chairman of the Parish Council.
5. Public notice of the meeting must be given at least 7 clear days beforehand.
6. The notice must: specify the time and place of the intended meeting; specify the business to be transacted at the meeting; be signed by the Chairman of the Parish Council.
7. Notice of the Annual Parish Meeting is to be given by: posting a notice of the meeting on the Parish Council notice board, and the KPC website.

Times of Annual Parish Meetings

8. The Annual Parish Meeting of a parish must assemble annually on some day between 1st March and 1st June, both inclusive, in every year.
9. The proceedings at an Annual Parish Meeting shall not commence earlier than 6 o'clock in the evening and may not be held in premises which are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other room is available free or at a reasonable cost.

Presiding at the Annual Parish Meeting

10. The Chairman of the Parish Council, if present, must preside at the meeting. If the Chairman is absent, the Vice Chairman must, if present, preside.
11. The chairperson for the meeting shall have, for the purposes of that meeting, the powers and authority of the Chairman
12. Only local government electors for the parish are qualified to vote at the Annual Parish Meeting or a poll consequent thereon. Each elector can give one vote on any question and no more. A question to be decided by an Annual Parish Meeting shall, in the first instance, be decided by a majority of those present at the meeting and voting thereon, and the decision of the person presiding the meeting as to the result of the voting shall be final unless a poll is demanded. In the case of an equality of votes, the person presiding at the meeting shall have a casting vote, in addition to any other vote he may have.
13. A poll may be demanded before the conclusion of an Annual Parish Meeting on any question arising at the meeting; but no poll shall be taken unless either the person presiding at the meeting consents or the poll is demanded by not less than ten, or one third of the local government electors present at the meeting, whichever is the fewer.
14. A poll consequent on an Annual Parish Meeting shall be a poll of those entitled to attend the meeting as local government electors, and shall be taken by ballot in accordance with the Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987 as amended. The rules provide that if a poll is demanded, the Chairman of the Annual Parish Meeting shall notify the District Council in which the parish is situated and the council shall appoint an officer to be a returning officer. Essentially, the procedure is similar to that of electing a local Councillor.

Open Forum

15. Any questions that are raised during the Open Forum session which cannot be readily answered by either the Chairman of the meeting, a designated Councillor or the Clerk, will be noted by the Minute Secretary and placed on the Agenda for the June or July Parish Council Meeting. An update will also be given under Matters Arising at

the next Annual Parish Meeting (for information only). Any resultant discussion will be deferred to the Open Forum section of that meeting.

Expenses of Annual Parish Meetings

16. The expenses of the Annual Parish Meeting (including the expenses of a poll) shall be paid by the Parish Council (section 150 of the Local Government Act 1972).

Annual Parish Meeting Resolutions

17. An Annual Parish Meeting's resolutions will not be binding on the Parish Council save in exceptional circumstances (e.g. a resolution for a Parish Council to provide allotment gardens will trigger a parish council's duty under s.23 Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 to consider if their provision of allotment gardens is sufficient to meet demand). Unless one of the exceptions applies, the Annual Parish Meeting's resolutions will be persuasive only and the council will need to decide if it wishes to disregard them.