

**Procedural standing orders of
Renfrewshire Valuation
Joint Board**



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Standing order	Subject	Page
1	Definitions	1 and 2
2	Applying the Interpretation Act 1978	3
3	Start date	3
4	First meeting after members have been appointed	3
5	Ordinary meetings	3
6	Special meetings	4
7	Notice of meetings	4
8	Restriction on business	5
9	Quorum	5
10	Failure to go to meetings	6
11	Substitute members	6
12	Minutes of meetings	6
13	Access for the public and press	6 and 7
14	Order of business	7
15	Convener – powers and duties	8 and 9
16	Giving notice of ‘motions’ (proposals of items to discuss)	9
17	Failing to discuss a motion after notice has been given	9
18	Motions against a previous decision	9
19	A motion or an amendment to be put forward and supported	10
20	A motion or an amendment not to be withdrawn	10
21	Members allowed to speak only once on a motion	10
22	Point of procedure	10
23	Right to reply	10
24	Closing a discussion	10 and 11
25	The time limit on speeches	11
26	Members may stand when speaking	11
27	Obstructive or offensive behaviour	11

Standing order	Subject	Page
28	Closing a debate	12
29	Motion for adjourning (suspending) a meeting	12
30	Second motion for adjourning a meeting	12
31	A motion or an amendment that has not been seconded	12
32	Method of voting	12 and 13
33	Taking a vote	13
34	Questions	14
35	Declaring interests	14
36	Voting on appointments	14 and 15
37	Putting deeds into force and using the board's seal	15
38	Amending and withdrawing standing orders	16
39	Suspending standing orders	16
40	Deputations	16
41	Delegating (passing authority) to subcommittees	17
42	Applying standing orders to subcommittees	17
43	Delegations (passing authority) to officers	17

Standing orders of Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board

Definitions

- 1 We (Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board) have prepared these standing orders under article 5 (5) of the Valuation Joint Boards (Scotland) Order 1995, and they follow article 3 and schedule 2 of that order. If there are any differences between these standing orders and the order, the order will apply.

In the standing orders, the following words have the following meanings.

1973 Act – the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended.

1985 Act – the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

Assessor – the official appointed under section 27(2) of the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act 1994.

Chair – a person appointed by the board to act as a convener of a subcommittee, or the person chairing a meeting of the board in the absence of the convener and depute convener, or the person chairing a meeting of a subcommittee in the absence of the convener of that subcommittee.

Clerk – the clerk to the board appointed under paragraph 4 of schedule 2 of the order.

Constituent authority – any of the councils of East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire.

Convener – the convener of the board appointed under paragraph 3 of schedule 2 of the order.

Depute convener – the depute convener of the board appointed under paragraph 3 of schedule 2 of the order.

Electoral Registration Officer – the assessor appointed under section 27 of the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act 1994 as referred to in the Minute of Agreement between East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and Renfrewshire Councils and the Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board.

Board – the Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board set up under the order.

Local member – a member elected to serve as a councillor for an electoral ward of a constituent authority.

Member – a person appointed by any of the constituent authorities from their own elected members to be a member of the board under paragraph 1 of schedule 2 of the order. Unless these standing orders say otherwise, 'member' also includes a substitute member as defined below.

Order – the Valuation Joint Boards (Scotland) Order 1995.

Subcommittee – a subcommittee appointed under paragraph 6 of schedule 2 of the order.

Substitute member – a person appointed by any of the constituent authorities from their own elected members to be a substitute member of the board under paragraph 1 of schedule 2 of the order.

Treasurer – the person appointed by the board to be treasurer to the board under paragraph 4 of schedule 2 of the order.

The Councillors' Code of Conduct – the code of conduct issued under part 1 of the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc (Scotland) Act 2000.

Applying the Interpretation Act 1978

- 2 The Interpretation Act 1978 applies to these standing orders in the same way as it applies to an Act of Parliament.

Start date

- 3 These standing orders apply from 18th November, 2005. The board may make changes from time to time under standing order 38.

Board meetings

First meeting after members have been appointed

- 4 In a year in which an ordinary election of councillors is held for the local government election area of each constituent authority, the board will hold a meeting on the date and at the time and place it has agreed on. At this meeting, the board will elect the convener and the depute convener who must never be members of the same constituent authority.

Ordinary meetings

- 5 The board will agree the dates, times and places for its ordinary meetings. The board will meet from time to time in each constituent authority area, and will normally hold at least four meetings a year.

Special meetings

- 6 The clerk may call a special meeting of the board at any time if:
- a he or she receives a request in writing to do so from the convener; or
 - b at least four members ask for a meeting in writing, setting out what business they want the meeting to deal with.

Any special meeting will be held within 14 days from when the clerk receives a written request, and at the time and place the clerk decides with the convener.

Notice of meetings

- 7 a The clerk must call all meetings by doing the following.
- Publishing a notice at least three days before the meeting of the board at the board's and constituent authorities' offices, giving the time and the place of the meeting. If the meeting is called by members of the board, the notice must be signed by those members and must set out what business will be dealt with.
 - Sending members a summons to go to the meeting, setting out what business will be dealt with. The clerk must sign the summons and leave it at or post it to the home address of every member of the board (or any other address any member may give) at least three days before the meeting.
- b If any member does not receive a summons to any meeting, the meeting will still be valid.

Restriction on business

- 8 a No business will be dealt with at a meeting of the board other than that shown in the summons, unless:
- it is an item of business that, by law, needs to be dealt with at a meeting of the board; or
 - due to special circumstances (which will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting), the chairperson believes that the item of business should be considered at the meeting.
- b However, if a meeting is called because members ask, only business listed in the request may be dealt with.

Quorum

- 9 a The quorum of the board (minimum number of members who need to be at a meeting for the meeting to take place) is four members (or their substitutes). If four members are not at a meeting 10 minutes after the time shown in the summons, the meeting will be postponed until any time and date the clerk may decide with the convener. The clerk will make a note of why the meeting has been postponed.
- b If fewer than four members of the board are entitled to vote on an item because of the terms of a declaration of an interest by a member under section 5 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, that item cannot be dealt with at the meeting.

Failure to go to meetings

- 10 If a member does not go to any meetings of the board for 12 months, the clerk must tell the board (unless the board has given the member permission not to attend). If the board is not satisfied about why the member has failed to attend, it will tell that member's constituent authority so that they can consider ending the appointment of that member and appointing a replacement member.

Substitute members

- 11 A substitute member can go to meetings of the board or its subcommittees as long as the constituent authority has told the clerk about the appointment, in writing.

Minutes of meetings

- 12 The clerk will take minutes of all board meetings. The minutes will record the names of the members who came to the meeting. They will then be printed and, as far as possible, sent to members at least three days before the next ordinary meeting of the board. The clerk must correct the minutes (if necessary) and then present them to the next meeting. If they are a true record of the proceedings of the meeting they relate to, the person chairing the meeting they are presented to must sign them.

Access for the public and press

- 13 a Every meeting of the board and its subcommittees will be open to the public (including the press). However, standing orders 13b, 13c and 13d apply.
- b The board may keep any members of the public out of a meeting or ask them to leave if they are preventing (or are likely to prevent) the board from carrying out its work. If a member of the public interrupts any meeting, the convener may warn that person. If they continue to interrupt the meeting, the convener may order the person to be removed from the

board's meeting room. If there is general disturbance in any part of the meeting room that is open to the public, the convener may order that part to be cleared.

- c A board meeting is not open to the public if it is likely that they would hear confidential information. Nothing in the standing orders authorises or demands that confidential information is revealed against the 1973 Act.
- d The board may decide to keep the public out of a meeting if it is likely that they would hear information that was defined as 'exempt' in schedule 7A of the 1973 Act.
- e Under this standing order, the board does not have to allow photographs to be taken or allow access for radio or television broadcasting (this will need the board's approval beforehand).

Order of business

- 14 The business of the board at ordinary meetings will take place in the following order.
 - a Minutes of the previous meeting, of any special meeting and of any subcommittee held since then.
 - b Business that must be dealt with by law.
 - c Business left over from the last meeting.
 - d 'Motions' (proposals of items to discuss) of which notice has been given (standing order 16).
 - e Special business (relating to yearly estimates or budgets).
 - f Ordinary business, including correspondence, communications and reports by officials.
 - g 'Deputations' (a group of people who want to raise a particular issue).
 - h Setting the date and place of the next meeting.

The convener may alter the order of business so that the meeting is run smoothly.

Convener – power and duties

- 15 a The convener will chair any board meeting if he or she is present.
- b If the convener is absent from a board meeting, the depute convener will chair the meeting.
- c If the convener and depute convener are absent, another member (chosen by the members present) will chair the meeting. The depute convener or chair will have the same powers and duties as the convener in relation to a meeting and its business.
- d Members must always respect the authority of the convener.
- e The convener must keep order and make sure that members have a fair hearing.
- f The convener will decide:
- all matters of conduct;
 - whether the board has the authority to deal with the business put before it; and
 - whether the business is relevant.

His or her decision will be final.

- g If two or more members want to speak, the convener will decide which member will speak first.

- h If disorder arises at any meeting, the convener will be entitled to suspend the meeting to any other time or day that he or she may fix at the time or afterwards. In these circumstances, the convener will suspend the meeting by simply leaving the meeting.
- i The convener will decide what procedures will apply if the order or these standing orders do not say.

Giving notice of 'motions' (proposals of items to discuss)

- 16 Every notice of a motion must be in writing, and be signed by the member of the board giving the notice and by one other member. If the clerk does not receive a notice of a motion at least 14 days before any meeting of the board, the motion will not be included in (or sent with) the summons calling that meeting.

Failing to discuss a motion after notice has been given

- 17 If the member who gave notice of a motion (or another member on his or her behalf) does not put forward that motion at the meeting when it comes to be considered, that motion will be considered as withdrawn and will not be dealt with without further notice (unless the board has agreed that it can be postponed).

Motions against a previous decision

- 18 A motion or an amendment against a decision of the board will not be able to be considered within six months from the date of the decision.

A motion or an amendment to be put forward and supported

- 19 Every motion or amendment must be put forward and seconded. Also, if the convener demands, it must be put into writing and given to the convener so that he or she can read it before it is put to the meeting. No member may put forward or support more than one motion or amendment on a particular issue.

A motion or an amendment not to be withdrawn

- 20 Once a motion or an amendment has been put forward and seconded, it cannot be altered or withdrawn without the permission of the members who put it forward and seconded it.

Members allowed to speak only once on a motion

- 21 A member may not speak to the board more than once on any subject being discussed, apart from on a point of procedure or with the permission of the convener, in order to explain. However, the member who put forward the motion will have the right to reply.

Point of procedure

- 22 A member who is speaking to the meeting when a point of procedure is raised must stop speaking until the convener has decided the point of procedure.

Right to reply

- 23 When replying, the member who put forward a motion must only answer the previous speakers and must not introduce any new matter.

Closing a discussion

- 24 After the member has finished replying, the discussion will end. After that, no member will be allowed to:

- offer their opinion;
- ask a question or otherwise interrupt the proceedings; or
- speak to the meeting, apart from asking for the vote to be taken by roll call.

The convener will then close the matter being discussed.

The time limit on speeches

- 25 The member putting forward a motion or an amendment may speak for no more than five minutes. Any speakers may then speak for no more than five minutes. The member who put forward the original motion will then have the right to speak for five minutes in reply. These time limits may be extended if the convener agrees.

Members may stand when speaking

- 26 A member of the board may stand when speaking and should address the convener. He or she should speak only on the subject under discussion, or on a point of procedure.

Obstructive or offensive behaviour

- 27 If any member at any meeting does not respect the authority of the convener, or behaves obstructively or offensively, a motion may then be proposed and seconded to suspend the member for the rest of the meeting. The motion shall be considered without discussion. If the motion is passed, the convener will order the member to leave the meeting. The member must then leave the meeting room immediately. The officials will act on the instructions of the convener to make sure that any such order is carried out.

Closing a debate

- 28 At the end of any speech, any member who has not spoken on the matter being discussed in the meeting may propose that the matter is closed. If this is seconded, the convener will take a vote if he or she believes that the matter has been adequately discussed. The debate will then end. No speeches may be made on the motion. If it is agreed, the member who put forward the original motion will have the right to reply.

Motion for 'adjourning' (suspending) a meeting

- 29 A member may put forward a motion to adjourn a meeting at the end of any speech. This motion will apply over all other motions. The motion must be proposed and seconded without a speech. If the motion to adjourn is agreed, the meeting will be adjourned immediately (unless the times for adjourning the meeting and restarting it are set out in the motion). The meeting will then be adjourned until the convener decides otherwise.

Second motion for adjourning a meeting

- 30 A second motion for adjourning the meeting cannot be made within half an hour unless the convener puts it forward. In this case, it will be dealt with under standing order 29.

A motion or an amendment that has not been supported

- 31 A motion or an amendment that has not been seconded, or which may be withdrawn or no longer dealt with after being seconded, will not be included in the minutes.

Method of voting

- 32 a At a meeting of the board or any subcommittee a vote on any matter will be taken by a show of hands, unless at least one third of the members present ask for a roll-call vote (where the clerk will call each member's name who must then show whether they are in favour of the motion or the amendment, or whether they are not voting). In this case, the vote will be taken by calling the roll.
- b Once a vote has been taken and someone immediately questions whether the count is accurate, the convener will decide whether to have a recount. If there is a recount, the convener will decide whether to take it by a show of hands or by roll call.
- c Unless the law or these standing orders say otherwise, all matters considered by the board will be decided by a majority of the members voting.
- d If there is an equal number of votes, the convener will have a second or casting vote. However, this will not apply if the vote relates to appointing a member to any particular office or subcommittee of the board. In this case, the decision will be made by lot (which may be by 'cutting the cards' or 'tossing a coin' or some other method).

Taking a vote

- 33 When a motion and two or more amendments have been proposed and seconded, the vote will first be taken between the motion and amendment first proposed. The successful proposal from that vote will be taken against the amendment second proposed and so on until there is only one amendment to be taken against the substantive motion (the motion that is left). Whichever proposal is agreed will become the decision of the meeting.

Questions

- 34 A member may put a question to the convener at a board meeting about any matter that is on the summons for that meeting. Unless the convener decides that the question is not relevant or that the board does not have the authority to discuss it, the convener will decide whether it will be answered verbally at the board meeting or in writing. If the convener decides that a question is out of order, the question will not be answered.

Declaring interests

- 35 If a member has, under the Councillors' Code of Conduct, an interest (whether financial or otherwise) in a matter they need to declare, and they are at a meeting of the board at which that matter is being considered, they must declare that interest as soon as possible at the meeting where that interest arises. The declaration must begin with the words "I declare an interest". If, under the Councillors' Code of Conduct, the interest prevents that member from taking part in discussion and voting on the matter, they must leave the meeting room until that matter has been discussed.

Voting on appointments

- 36 a If there is only one vacancy for a particular office or a subcommittee of the board and there are only two candidates, members will take a vote between these candidates. The one receiving the majority of votes will be appointed. If there is an equal number of votes, the decision will be made by lot (which may be by 'cutting the cards' or 'tossing a coin' or some other method).
- b 1 If there are more than two candidates, members will take a vote among all the candidates (each member being entitled to vote for only one candidate). If this vote has been taken and a candidate has an absolute majority of the members present and voting, that candidate will be appointed.

2 If no candidate has such a majority, the candidate with the fewest votes will be taken off the list of candidates. In second and further votes, the vote will be taken as in b1 until:

- one of the candidates receives the votes of a majority of the members present and voting (he or she will then be appointed); or
- there are only two candidates left.

A final vote will then be taken and the candidate who receives a majority of the votes will be appointed.

If on any vote two or more candidates at the bottom of the list have the same number of votes, the meeting will decide which of these candidates will be taken off the list. The decision will be made by lot (which may be by 'cutting the cards' or 'tossing a coin' or some other method).

- c If there is only one vacancy for a particular office or a subcommittee of the board, and there are more candidates than vacancies, each vacancy will be filled separately following the voting procedure set out in b1 and b2.
- d When appointing an officer, the board will follow the procedures set out in a, b1 and b2, or any other procedures the board agrees to follow before the appointment.

Signing deeds and using the board's seal

- 37 a The clerk has the power to sign a document on behalf of the board by signing the document in front of a witness.
- b Where it is necessary to attach the common seal of the board to a document, the common seal may be used only with the board's permission.

Amending and withdrawing standing orders

- 38 Any motion to amend or withdraw these standing orders (when proposed and seconded) will not be discussed until the next ordinary meeting of the board.

Suspending standing orders

- 39 If a motion is made at any time during a meeting to suspend any of these standing orders, that standing order may be suspended relating to any business at that meeting, as long as at least two thirds of the members present and voting decide to do so. However, standing orders 6, 7, 14 and 21 may not be suspended.

Deputations (a group of people who want to raise a particular issue)

- 40 If the clerk receives a written request that the board should receive a deputation on a particular matter, the clerk must first refer it to the convener. If the convener considers that the matter raised by the deputation is relevant and one which the board has the authority to decide on, the written request will be put on the agenda of the first appropriate meeting of the board. After that, the board may arrange to hear the deputation at a further meeting of the board.

If the board agrees that arrangements can be made to hear a deputation, the following conditions apply.

- a There must be no more than three people in the deputation.
- b Representatives of the deputation may speak for no more than 10 minutes, unless the convener says otherwise.
- c Members may ask the deputation only questions that are relevant to the subject of the deputation.

Subcommittees

Delegating (passing authority) to subcommittees

- 41 a The board may set up subcommittees in line with paragraph 6 of schedule 2 of the order.
- b The board will appoint the convener of any subcommittee. If the convener is absent, the members present will appoint someone from among themselves to chair the meeting.
- c The quorum (minimum number of members who need to be at a meeting for the meeting to take place) of a subcommittee will be three members. If three members are not at a meeting 10 minutes after the time shown in the summons, the meeting will be postponed until any time and date the clerk may decide with the convener. The clerk will make a note of why the meeting has been postponed.

Applying standing orders to subcommittees

- 42 Standing orders 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36 apply to subcommittees set up under standing order 41.

Scheme of delegation to officers

Delegations (passing authority) to officers

- 43 The officers of the board are authorised to use the powers the board grants to them, or as set out in a scheme of delegation that the board approves from time to time.