

## All Town Councillors – For Information

### **The English Parish/Town Meeting**

Every English Parish/Town must have a parish/town meeting (In Hednesford this is known as the Annual Assembly)

#### **Membership and Right to Preside**

A parish/town meeting consists of the local government electors registered for the area for which it is held. Where there is a parish/town council its chairman may attend (whether an elector or not) and if present must preside. The vice-chairman must preside in the chairman's absence. If both are absent the meeting elects someone to preside.

#### **Number, Date and Time of Meetings**

The parish/town meeting must assemble annually between 1 March and 1 June (inclusive). In addition it must meet when convened by the town council and it may be convened as often as required. Proceedings must not begin before 6.00 p.m.

#### **Right to Convene**

A parish/town meeting may be convened by the chairman of the town council or any two town councillors or by six electors for the area. The town council may also convene it but is under no obligation to do so unless its consent is required before the town council does certain acts.

#### **Notices and Agenda**

Notices specifying the time and place and business of an intended meeting must be affixed in some conspicuous place or places in the town in addition as much publicity can be given as desired. There is no statutory format for the agenda for parish meetings.

The minimum notice is usually 7 days.

#### **Quorum**

The quorum is two unless a document has to be executed in which case it is three.

#### **Decisions**

Decisions are taken in the first instance by a majority of those present and voting. If the chairman is an elector for the town he has an original as well as a casting vote; if he is not an elector he has only a casting vote. Unless a poll is demanded before the end of the meeting, the chairman's declaration of the result is final.

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## **Voting**

Unlike the town council, a parish/town meeting is not required to vote in any particular way.

## **Poll**

A poll may be demanded not later than the end of a meeting on any question arising at it. Such a poll must be held if ten or one-third of the electors present (whichever is less) insists or if the person presiding at the meeting consents. The wording of any question to be answered in the poll must be settled before the meeting ends. The chairman must immediately notify the district council if a poll is required. The returning officer would make the necessary arrangements with the cost having to be met by the town.

## **Places of Meetings**

It can meet in any place where the town council may meet but it is not entitled to meet in a church or vestry.

## **Relationship Between Parish/Town Meeting and Parish Council**

A parish/town meeting may discuss town affairs its resolutions differ considerably in their legal consequences. In a few cases a resolution is legally binding. In all others a resolution is persuasive only; the town council may legally disregard it and leave the electors to their remedy at the next election.

The town council meets the expenses of the parish/town meeting.