

PART III.—Parish Meetings.

14.—(1) The parish meeting of a parish shall assemble annually on some day between 1st March and 1st June, both inclusive, in every year.

(2) Subject to sub-paragraph (1) above and to sub-paragraph (3) below, parish meetings shall be held on such days and at such times as may be fixed by the parish council or, if there is no parish council, by the chairman of the parish meeting.

(3) In a parish which does not have a separate parish council the parish meeting shall, subject to any provision made by a grouping order, assemble at least twice in every year.

(4) The proceedings at a parish meeting shall not commence earlier than 6 o'clock in the evening.

(5) A parish meeting shall not be held in premises licensed for the sale of intoxicating liquor, except in cases where no other suitable room is available for such a meeting either free of charge or at a reasonable cost.

15.—(1) A parish meeting may be convened by—

(a) the chairman of the parish council, or

(b) any two parish councillors for the parish, or

(c) where there is no parish council, the chairman of the parish meeting or any person representing the parish on the district council, or

(d) any six local government electors for the parish.

(2) Not less than seven clear days, or, in a case falling within sub-paragraph (3) below, not less than fourteen clear days, before a parish meeting, public notice of the meeting shall be given, specifying the time and place of the intended meeting and the business to be transacted at the meeting, and signed by the person or persons convening the meeting.

(3) The fourteen-day period of notice specified in sub-paragraph (2) above is applicable if any business proposed to be transacted at a parish meeting relates to—

(a) the establishment or dissolution of a parish council, or

(b) the grouping of the parish with another parish or parishes under a common parish council.

(4) Public notice of a parish meeting shall be given—

(a) by posting a notice of the meeting in some conspicuous place or places in the parish, and

(b) in such other manner, if any, as appears to the person or persons convening the meeting to be desirable for giving publicity to the meeting.

16.—The chairman of a parish council shall be entitled to attend a parish meeting for the parish (or, where a grouping order is in force, for any of the parishes comprised in the group) whether or not he is a local government elector for the parish, but if he is not such an elector he shall not be entitled to give any vote at the meeting other than any casting vote which he may have by virtue of paragraph 18(3) below.

17.—(1) In a parish having a separate parish council the chairman of the parish council, if present, shall preside at a parish meeting and if he is absent the vice-chairman (if any) shall, if present, preside.

(2) In a parish which does not have a separate parish council the chairman chosen for the year in question under section 15(10) or 88(3) above, if present, shall preside.

(3) If the chairman and the vice-chairman of the parish council or the chairman of the parish meeting, as the case may be, is absent from an assembly of the parish meeting, the parish meeting may appoint a person to take the chair, and that person shall have, for the purposes of that meeting, the powers and authority of the chairman.

18.—(1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, each local government elector may, at a parish meeting or at a poll consequent thereon, give one vote and no more on any question.

(2) A question to be decided by a parish meeting shall, in the first instance, be decided by the majority of those present at the meeting and voting thereon, and the decision of the person presiding at the meeting as to the result of the voting shall be final unless a poll is demanded.

(3) 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.

(4) A poll may be demanded before the conclusion of a 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 less.

(5) A poll consequent on a 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 rules made by the Secretary of State, and the provisions of the rules with respect to the elections of parish councillors under section 36 of the Representation of the People Act 1983 above and of the enactments mentioned in section 187(1) of that Act shall, subject to any adaptations, alterations or exceptions made by the first-mentioned rules, apply in the case of a poll so taken as if it were a poll for the election of parish councillors.

(6) Rules made under sub-paragraph (5) above shall be laid before each House of Parliament as soon as may be after they are made.

19.—(1) Minutes of the proceedings of a parish meeting, or a committee thereof, shall be drawn up and entered in a book provided for the purpose and shall be signed at the same or the next following assembly of the parish meeting, or, as the case may be, meeting of the committee, by the person presiding at the meeting, and any minute purporting to be so signed shall be received in evidence without further proof.

(2) Until the contrary is proved, a parish meeting, or a meeting of a committee thereof, in respect of the proceedings of which a minute has been made and signed as mentioned in sub-paragraph (1) above shall be deemed to have been duly convened and held, and all the persons present at the meeting shall be deemed to have been duly qualified, and where the proceedings are those of a committee, the committee shall be deemed to have been duly constituted and to have had power to deal with the matters referred to in the minutes.

20.—(1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, in a parish having a separate parish council the parish council may make, vary and revoke standing orders for the regulation of proceedings and business at parish meetings for the parish.

(2) In a parish which does not have a separate parish council, the parish meetings may, subject to the provisions of this Act, regulate their own proceedings and business.