

## **Addendum to Standing Orders covering Virtual Meetings**

### **Remote Meetings**

- a **Meetings shall take place at a time and date as the Council shall determine**  
In the interest of Council maintaining an open and transparent policy and in the spirit of cohesiveness the usual following guidelines may still be followed: Standing orders 3e and f.
- b **Council may alter the frequency, move, or cancel such meetings.**
- c **A meeting of a local authority is not limited to a meeting of persons all of whom, or any of whom, are present in the same place and any reference to a “place” where a meeting is held, or to be held, includes reference to more than one place including electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers.**
- d **Members (including members of the public) in remote attendance attends the meeting at any time if all of the conditions in sub-section are satisfied:**
  - (a) **to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, the other members in attendance,**
  - (b) **to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, any members of the public entitled to attend the meeting in order to exercise a right to speak at the meeting, and**
  - (c) **to be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by any other members of the public attending the meeting.**
- e **Member and public access to documents and remote access of public and press to a local authority meeting to enable them to attend or participate in that meeting by electronic means, including by telephone conference, video conference, live webcasts, and live interactive streaming.**
- f **A meeting being “open to the public” include access to the meeting through remote means including (but not limited to) video conferencing, live webcast, and live interactive streaming and where a meeting is accessible to the public through such remote means the meeting is open to the public whether or not members of the public are able to attend the meeting in person**
- g **Being “present” at a meeting include access through remote means mentioned in paragraph (a) above.”**
- h **Members to verbally announce their vote in turn**
- i **Provide, in a conspicuous place or publishing on the website of the Parish Council public notice of the time, place and agenda.**
- j **For security and Data Protection reasons Councils must hold their own account for their preferred virtual meeting platform.**

## Protocol for Virtual Meetings

- Everyone to mute themselves when joining and not speaking during the meeting - this helps keep background noise to a minimum which will improve everyone's ability to hear the discussions.
- In order for a Councillor to make a point regarding an item under discussion they should raise their hand and wait for the Chair to invite them to speak, at which time they should unmute the microphone and mute it again after they have made their point. If any member has joined by telephone only the Chair will invite them to speak before moving to a proposal.
- The Councillors and Public should be aware that the meeting will be recorded
- The clerk may ask everyone to state their name before they start speaking so that it is always clear who is speaking.
- It may be the case that some individuals have technical issues that mean that they 'leave' the meeting, for example their internet connection means that they are cut off. It may be necessary to conduct a roll call part way through the meeting to ensure Councillors are still present.
- Declaring Interests: The council will consider how they will manage councillors 'leaving' a meeting if they have an interest and do not wish to be part of the meeting, particularly if they consider there will be negative public perception if they remain. It is suggested that the councillor with an interest, leave the meeting by being placed in the waiting room but agree, with the chairman to return to the meeting after that part of the meeting is concluded.
- If there are parts of the agenda that are confidential then you will need to ask the public observers to leave as you normally would.
- The Chair will then work through the Agenda supported by the Clerk as required. **The Agenda will be as concise as possible and focus on what is important, where practicable it will avoid items that may require lengthy debate.**
- Minute taking should be done as usual with the clerk seeking clarity at any point, should it be needed. The minutes should be agreed at the next meeting and can always be retrospectively signed at the next face-to-face meeting.