



ECCLESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Serving the Community since 1894

Remote Meetings - Standing Orders Addendum (May 2020)

Note: Bold text = mandatory (defined in legislation)

INTRODUCTION

The following Standing Orders are an addendum to the Standing Orders (SOs) for Ecclesfield Parish Council to enable the effective management of meetings held remotely due to the Coronavirus pandemic; in all other matters, Ecclesfield Parish Council's Standing Orders apply.

CONVENING MEETINGS

- a. A remote meeting of the Council or of one of its committees will be convened in accordance with Paragraph 10 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- b. The Council will ensure that all non-confidential meeting papers are posted on its website.

CHAIMAN'S ROLE

All meetings shall commence with a statement from the Council Chairman, outlining the procedures to be undertaken to hold a lawful and effective remote meeting and will highlight the requirement for all Councillors and non-Councillors with voting rights to observe the code of conduct adopted by the Council.

PRESENT

Councillors are deemed present for the purposes of any remote meeting, when they can speak, hear, and be heard (and where practicable see and be seen) by all those in attendance (whether by video conferencing or by telephone).

Where the Council has taken reasonable measures to provide guidance and support to a Councillor to join a remote meeting, but that member is experiencing difficulties that are outside of the control of the Council, the lack of attendance of the member shall not invalidate a properly convened and quorate meeting

All Councillors present will be required to state their name prior to the commencement of the meeting.

QUORUM

No business may be transacted at a meeting unless at least one-third of the whole number of members of the Council are present and in no case shall the quorum of a meeting be less than three.

The quorum for Ecclesfield Parish Council meetings is five. The quorum for Committee meetings is three.

If a meeting is or becomes inquorate no business shall be transacted and the meeting shall be closed. The business on the agenda for the meeting shall be adjourned to another meeting.

VOTING

Subject to a meeting being quorate, all questions at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of the Councillors and non-Councillors with voting rights present and voting.

The Chairman of a meeting may give an original vote on any matter put to the vote, and in the case of an equality of votes may exercise his casting vote whether or not he gave an original vote.

At the request of a Councillor, the voting on any question shall be recorded to show whether each Councillor present and voting gave his vote for or against that question. Such a request shall be made before moving on to the next item of business on the agenda.

Voting to be by show of hands in video conference. For any telephone votes the following procedure will be followed:

- The Chairman will request a response to each proposal verbally, from each member present.
- The Chairman will confirm that response verbally.
- The Chairman will read out all votes cast once collected.
- The minutes will reflect the decision of the Council.

COUNCIL/COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

The rules of debate, as set out in Ecclesfield Parish Councils Standing Orders will apply.

On each item of business to be transacted, which requires discussion members will be asked to use the 'raise hand' button if they wish to speak during the meeting, if joining by video link (all microphones should be muted unless speaking) and wait to be invited to speak by the Chairman.

Where members are joining the meeting by telephone:

- The Chairman will ask each member, in turn, whether he/she wishes to contribute to the discussion.
- After each member has been heard, the Chairman will call for a proposal on the item of business to be transacted, by a member present (member to state their name prior to making the proposal)
- Once a proposal is moved, if required, the Chairman will call for that proposal to be seconded by a member present (member to state their name prior to speaking)
- The Chairman will request any amendments to said proposal from each member present, prior to moving to a vote on that proposal.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN AN ITEM OF BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED AT THE MEETING

A Councillor or a non-Councillor with voting rights who has a disclosable pecuniary interest or another interest as set out in the Council's code of conduct in a matter being considered at a meeting is subject to statutory limitations or restrictions under the code on his right to participate and vote on that matter.

Any member who declares an interest in an item on the agenda must leave the meeting for the duration of that item of business in accordance with Standing Order 13b. The member will be moved to the 'waiting room' by the host in zoom whilst the item is discussed and then re-admitted after the item has been discussed.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Any member of the public wishing to speak during the public session should raise their hand and wait for the Chairman to invite them to speak. In accordance with standing orders no public participation is permitted during the formal meeting of the Council.

The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the Chairman of the meeting; a member of the public shall not speak for more than 3 minutes (Standing Order 3).

The Chairman will ask each member of the public, joining the meeting by telephone, if they wish to contribute to this session.

Members of the public joining the meeting by video link shall raise their hand to speak – the Clerk will make a note of these and they will be invited to speak by the Chairman.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

All meetings of the Council and its Committees must be available for the press and public to attend (i.e. open to the public).

The Council or a Committee may resolve to exclude the press and public, from a meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings), due to publicity of the matter being prejudicial to the public interest, by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons.

If the Council/Committee resolves to exclude the press and public, the Clerk will remove members of the press and public from the meeting before the meeting proceeds.

Approved by Council July 2020

Review Date July 2021