



Virtual Meeting Policy

1. Introduction

Exelby Leeming and Londonderry Parish Council recognises the opportunities offered by meeting virtually in times when a physical meeting is not appropriate and has developed this policy to assist members of the parish council and residents to understand how these meetings differ from a physical meeting and to assist people to engage in debate and decision making. The policy is to be delivered within 'The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020'.

2. Publishing the agenda and providing documents

Councillors will be summonsed as per regulations, with the agenda and documents being placed on the Council's website and on parish noticeboards.

3. Virtual Meeting

The Parish Council's chosen platform to provide video communications is Zoom, which enables video and audio conferencing for persons using mobile devices, desktops, and fixed room systems.

In preparation for the meeting the Clerk to the Council will publish on the agenda and via email to councillors

- The zoom meeting link
- Meeting ID
- Meeting passcode

4. Standing Orders

Standing Orders will be used to guide the meeting in a similar way as if persons were present in a place.

5. Specific Virtual Meeting Arrangements

a. Discussions

This section applies if members are experiencing good connectivity. In the case of poor connectivity see 5c.

At the start of the meeting there will be a roll call to determine those councillors present for those who do not have a video link. During the meeting all persons other than members will be muted. During the public session period members of the public will be required to 'enable video' in order for them to be visible to



the Chair and will raise their hand to indicate that they wish to speak. Their microphone will then be unmuted and they can address the meeting. Following the conclusion of their address the microphone will be muted.

During the meeting members and officers will raise their hand to indicate to the Chair that they wish to speak on an agenda item. Members will state their name when they are speaking for those who do not have video link.

During the meeting, the Chair will invite members to speak either in rotation or where the member has raised their hand indicating a desire to speak to ensure every member has the opportunity to speak and avoid members speaking over each other.

All members attending the meeting will monitor their own background noise and mute their own microphones, except when speaking, if necessary to negate interference with the meeting.

All members may be requested to 'mute' their own microphones whenever they are not speaking.

b. Voting

All voting will be undertaken by a show of hands. The votes to be read back before moving on to the next agenda item to ensure that everyone vote is recorded accurately.

c. Poor connectivity

In the case of poor connectivity the Chair will decide whether to continue with the meeting or to reconvene.

In the case of video not being available for some or all of members attending the Chair can choose to continue but to operate on a roll call for councillor views on individual agenda items.

d. Attendance

If a member is believed to have 'dropped out' this will be minuted. If 'drop outs' result in the meeting becoming inquorate members will endeavour to re-join for a period of 15 minutes. After 15 minutes if the meeting is still inquorate the Chair will suspend the meeting and reconvene at a later time and date subject to the statutory days of notice. Members will be telephoned to be advised of the suspension.



e. Telephone attendance

Persons wishing to attend by telephone are advised to contact the Clerk in advance in order that processes can be put in place to enable appropriate engagement.

6. Virtual Meeting Etiquette

Normal Standing Orders apply with regard to Conduct at Meetings and all attendees are expected to be mindful of the difficulties people experience with regard to the operation of technology.

Behaviour that is contrary to the intended outcomes of the meeting will be dealt with at the discretion of the Chair. For a member of the public or press this may result in them being dismissed from the Zoom meeting.

7. Declaration of Interests

A councillor that has declared an interest that does not have a dispensation that requires them to leave the meeting will be placed in the waiting room. On conclusion of the item for which the declaration is made the councillor will be returned to the meeting.

8. Public Participation

The Clerk will read any pre-submitted addresses from the press and public.

9. Confidential Matters

Confidential matters will be dealt with through a separate Zoom meeting that is available to members only. On conclusion of the non-confidential matters on an agenda the meeting will be suspended for members to re-join using the confidential zoom meeting link that will have been provided to members only.

10. Information

The chat view box on the Zoom meeting will be disabled however it may provide additional information to attendees depending of the specific meeting.

Policy adopted on 30th November 2020

Signed:.....

Review Date: Nov 2021

Parish Clerk
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