

**Bulmer Parish Council**  
**Draft Protocol for Parish Council meetings being held via remote means**

1. The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Corona Virus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 permit Parish Councils to meet via remote means.

This protocol is pursuant to those regulations and sets out the rules to govern the smooth running of any meetings that Bulmer Parish Council (the Council) chooses to hold using such remote technology and is supplemental to the Standing Orders of the Council which shall otherwise remain in full force and effect.

2. The Chairman shall chair the meeting in the usual manner and issue requests and requirements to the Clerk to assist with the administrative control of the meeting.
3. As the Clerk is legally required to organise the meeting, she will be noted on screen as the host, which will enable her to assist with the administrative control of the meeting with deference to the requirements of the Chairman.

This will enable relevant documentation on screen to be shared, persons to be admitted to the meeting, the exclusion of persons from the meeting (if required) and observations and feedback given to the Chairman, where a participant uses the chat function or the 'raise my hand' function. For the sake of clarification, the Clerk shall not chair the meeting which shall be the sole responsibility of the Chairman.

4. The Clerk shall organise the meeting and shall send the meeting link including meeting code and password to councillors to enable them to log into the meeting. The Clerk shall also affix information to the agenda to enable persons who wish to attend the meeting to log on. The Parish Council is fully committed to its legal obligation to allow members of the public to attend any Parish Council meetings.
5. Entry to each meeting for all participants whether councillors or members of the public, shall be via a virtual waiting room. In the event that a councillor declares a disclosable pecuniary interest in an agenda item whereby they shall absent themselves for the duration of that meeting item, they shall be placed in the virtual waiting room and only re-admitted to the meeting at the conclusion of that business.

Where it is not possible to use a virtual waiting room any person with a disclosable pecuniary interest shall leave the meeting and await a communication from the Clerk before re-joining.

6. In the event of the Council wishing to debate business of a confidential nature and as a result of passing the appropriate resolution in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, any members of the public shall be required to log off and leave the meeting. In the event that the Clerk notes that they have not complied with that request, those individuals shall be removed from the meeting to enable confidential business to be discussed.
7. The existing rules in relation to disorderly conduct at a meeting will continue to apply and in particular Standing Order clause 1. In the event that a person present at the meeting refuses to comply with any requirement by the Chairman to moderate or improve their conduct, the Chairman may, by resolution, require that person be

removed from the meeting entirely and not to be re-admitted and the Clerk shall action such a request accordingly.

8. With the exception of the Chairman and the Clerk all those in attendance at the meeting shall be muted to avoid extraneous noise and to allow the smooth running of the meeting. A person shall only be unmuted and permitted to speak at the discretion of the Chairman. The Chairman will allow discussion of each agenda item in accordance with the rules contained in the existing Standing Orders to allow appropriate debate.
9. If a person wishes to speak during a meeting, they will use the 'raise my hand' function or the chat function to communicate this wish to the Clerk who will advise the Chairman. The Chairman will make the final decision on who shall be unmuted and for how long.
10. In relation to voting upon agenda items the Chairman shall ask each Councillor to vote by using the 'raise my hand' function or the chat function and the Clerk shall verbally confirm the result of each vote.
11. In the event that a document requires a signature, it shall be acceptable for the document to be sent by post for signing and then delivered back by post to the Clerk.
12. At the point where the Chairman closes the meeting, the meeting will be finished by the host.