

# **LITTLE BURSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL**

## **VIRTUAL MEETING PROCEDURE**

This procedure has been written to comply with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

### **1. Agenda and notice:**

- a) An agenda will be published on the Parish Council's website 3 clear days before the meeting and where safe to do so the Parish Council noticeboard.
- b) A summons to attend the meeting will also be issued to Parish Councillors within the same timeframe together with all appropriate documentation in order for Members to make informed comment and decisions.
- c) The agenda will include a link for Members to join the meeting.
- d) Residents will need to contact the Clerk for the password to access the meeting to ensure the security and integrity of the meeting.

### **2. Joining the meeting:**

- a) The meeting will be a formal meeting of Little Burstead Parish Council and as such, Standing Orders will be followed in conjunction with this procedure.
- b) All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting which will assist with keeping background noise to a minimum and allow everyone to hear the discussions.
- c) The Chairman will welcome participants to the meeting and explain that the meeting is a formal meeting of the Parish Council meeting. The Chairman will chair the meeting as if it were a face to face meeting using the agenda.
- d) Appropriate dress for attending meetings is required.

### **3. Member Participation;**

- a) The Chairman will introduce each item. If a Member wishes to speak, they must raise their hand indicating their wish to speak.
- b) When invited to speak by the Chairman, the Member can unmute themselves to speak. Once finished, the member will mute themselves to reduce background noise.

- c) The Clerk or designated person can mute/unmute participants. If there is any inappropriate behaviour, the participant will be placed in the waiting room.
- d) For any person taking part in the meeting via telephone, the Chairman will ask that member if they have any comments to make throughout the meeting to ensure full participation from members of the Parish Council.

#### **4. Public Participation:**

- a) If any members of the public are present, each Councillor will introduce themselves.
- b) Members of the public will be given an opportunity to speak during the public participation forum but will not speak at other times, unless permitted by the Chairman.

#### **5. Declaration of Interests:**

If a member has a pecuniary interest in an item, they must declare it under agenda item ***Declaration of Interests*** and explain the nature of the interest. When that item is being discussed and considered, the Clerk will remove the member with the pecuniary interest to the waiting room for the entirety of the item. Once the item has been concluded, the Clerk will readmit the member from the waiting room.

#### **6. Voting:**

- a) Voting will be via show of hands as per the Council's Standing Orders.
- b) Voting for those present with video capabilities will be by physically raising their hand. For example, when the Chairman asks who is in favour of a decision, members will raise their hand to indicate their agreement. The Chairman will then ask those members to lower their hand before asking for any votes against the decision and any abstentions.
- c) For those members taking part via telephone link, the Chairman will ask for the members' vote at the same time as other members raise their hands.
- d) The Chairman will then declare the result of the vote.
- e) Should a secret ballot be requested, the Clerk will set up a poll during the meeting where members can vote anonymously.

#### **7. Confidential Items:**

Where there is a confidential item that needs to be considered, the Clerk will send members an invitation to a separate meeting that follows the

normal meeting. This private meeting will be accessed as soon as other business within the public domain has been concluded.

**8. Minutes:**

Minutes will be agreed at the next meeting (whether virtual or face to face) and will be retrospectively “wet” signed as soon as possible after the meeting.

**9. Other information**

- a) The ‘file sharing’ function will not be used as part of the virtual platform meeting. If necessary, the Clerk or designated person will display any documents using the ‘share screen’ function.
- b) The ‘chat’ function can only be used when Members/Participants audio is not working or is failing.
- c) All other regulations in place for ordinary physical meetings (i.e. Standing Orders, Declarations of Interest, Code of Conduct, Quorum) remain in place for virtual meetings.

Approved: Parish Council Meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 Minute: 7/20