

Remote Meetings - Standing Orders Addendum (May 2020)

INTRODUCTION

The following Standing Orders are an addendum to ordinary adopted Standing Orders for Burley Parish Council to enable the effective management of meetings held remotely due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic; in all other matters, Burley Parish Council Standing Orders apply.

1. CONVENING

- a) A remote meeting of the Council or of one of its committees will be convened in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12 (10).
- b) The council will ensure that all non-confidential meeting papers are posted on its website with the agenda in accordance with Section 17 of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.
- c) All remote meetings of the Council and its Committees shall remain open to the public. In line with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, “open to the public” includes access 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;”.

2. CHAIRMAN'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.

3. PRESENT

Councillors are deemed 'present' for the purposes of any remote meeting when they are able:

- 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.

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.

4. 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.

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.

5. 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 so as 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.

If required for clarity, the Chairman will request a response to each proposal verbally, from each member present. The chairman will then confirm that response verbally. The Clerk will read out all votes cast once collected. The minutes will reflect the decision of the council.

6. COUNCIL/COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

On each item of business to be transacted, which requires discussion (where members are joining the meeting remotely):

- The rules of debate, as set out in Burley Parish Council Standing Orders will apply.
- 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.

7. 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.

If a councillor or non-councillor with voting rights has a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at a meeting, the Chairman will move that item of business to the end of the agenda allowing that member to leave the meeting before discussion takes place and ensuring that they remain involved in all other agenda items and decisions.

8. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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.

The Chairman will ask each member of the public, joining the meeting remotely, if they wish to contribute to the Public Participation item. The clerk/vice-chairman will make a note of these and they will be invited to speak by the chairman.

9. 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.

All matters which may require consideration after the exclusion of the press and public are to be considered at the end of the list of business to be transacted at that meeting (agenda).

Following the resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting, members of press and public will be asked to leave the meeting or shall be removed from the meeting by the host.

If absolutely necessary the council should continue the meeting by going into a fresh remote meeting link. If this course of action is required, it is to be treated as a continuation of the original meeting; the original meeting has not ended until the confidential business is dealt with.