



Royston Town Council

Virtual Meeting Procedure

Until May 2021, Parish Councils have been given provision under *The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020* to hold legal virtual meetings in order that Town Council business can be maintained.

A variety of different platforms are available and the Town Council has chosen to use the Zoom platform in order that the meeting is publicly available. The Clerk will co-host the meeting with the Chairman using the Town Council account.

The meeting will be a formal Town Council meeting and will be held using the agenda and summons which the Clerk has published. It will be governed by the usual Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and associated policies.

A meeting ID, passcode and link to the virtual meeting will be published on the agenda, which will go on the noticeboard and on the council's website, in order that the public are able to attend, just as they would be able to attend a meeting in the Town Hall.

Attendees will also have the ability to dial in to the meeting via telephone.

Attendees will collect in the Zoom 'waiting room' prior to the meeting. As the 'Host', the Clerk will have the ability to mute or remove anyone deemed a nuisance at the Chairman's request.

All attendees will be set to 'mute' on entry to the meeting and only the Chairman of the meeting will remain unmuted. All other participants, if they wish to speak will be invited to unmute. The Clerk will have the ability to mute anyone who forgets.

All Councillor attendees will display their name in the format "Cllr Firstname Surname" for the public to be able to identify them, just as they would at an in-person meeting.

If a Councillor has declared an interest in an item on the agenda, they will be placed in the waiting room for the duration of the agenda item. Once the item has been concluded, they will be re-admitted.

In order to protect participants from malware, the 'chat', file sharing and screen sharing function will be disabled during the meeting. If necessary, the Clerk will display any documents required using the 'share screen' function.

As with meetings in the Town Hall, members of the public will be given the opportunity to speak during public participation, but will not be permitted to speak at other times. Any



member of the public wishing to speak at the meeting should contact the Town Clerk in advance of the meeting.

Any councillor wanting to speak should raise their hand using 'raise hand' in the options within the Participants section or by waving if they're using a camera so that the Chairman can see.

The Councillor participants will introduce themselves. Members of the public may introduce themselves if they should wish.

Meetings will be recorded. The recording will be held long enough to confirm the minutes and then destroyed.

Meeting participants may wish to protect their personal environment by choosing a virtual background in the Zoom Settings 'Virtual Background' or alternatively should consider what can be seen behind them while on camera.

This procedure was considered at a meeting on 6th July 2020 and will be reviewed in one year, or at an earlier date if circumstances dictate.

29th June 2020

Minute number 05/21