

CAVERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Virtual Meeting Procedure

From 4 April 2020 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 (“the 2020 Regulations”) to hold legal virtual meetings in order that Parish Council business can be maintained.

A variety of different platforms including Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts, Webex or Zoom are available.

The Parish Council has chosen to use the Zoom platform in order that the meeting is publicly available. The Clerk will Host the meeting using a Parish Council-paid account.

The meeting will be a formal Parish 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 code and link to the virtual meeting will be published on the agenda (which will also go on the noticeboards), on the website and on social media in order that the public are able to attend, just as they would be able to attend a meeting in the school 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 order 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 for participants other than the Clerk during the meeting. If necessary, the Clerk will display any documents required using the 'share screen' function.

The Council will have the facility to use the 'Record' facility within Zoom if required in accordance with the Recording of Meetings Policy.

As with meetings in the school hall, members of the public will be given the opportunity to speak during public participation, but will not be permitted, unless invited to do so by the Chairman, to speak at other times.

Anyone wanting to speak should raise their hand using 'raise hand' in the options within the Participants section or by waving if 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.

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 xx and will be reviewed in one year.

5 May 2020