



## **Remote Meeting Protocol and Procedures**

### **Amendments to St Mewan Parish Council Standing Orders**

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 allow local councils to hold remote meetings. The regulations give automatic authority to hold remote meetings and amend standing orders as required.

These regulations remain in force until May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 or earlier if repealed and require temporary changes to Standing Orders.

The Regulations made under s78 of Coronavirus Act 2020 apply and where there is a conflict between these and any other adopted standing orders or legislation, these Remote Meetings Procedures take precedence in relation to any remote meeting.

#### **1) Annual Meeting**

- a) The requirement to hold an Annual Meeting of the Council is to be disregarded and prior to May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 may only take place
  - i) where called by the Chair or
  - ii) following a resolution calling for an annual meeting being passed at an ordinary or extra ordinary meeting of the Council.

#### **2) Access to Information**

- a) Published on the St Mewan Parish Council's website

#### **3) Notice of Meetings**

- a) Summons will continue to be served on Members by the agreed method (electronically) and the clerk will provide members with an electronic invitation and meeting password in order to gain entry to the meeting.
- b) Public invitations to the meetings will be published on the Parish Council's website within the statutory time frame

#### **4) Remote Access to Meetings for Members**

- a) St Mewan Parish Council and Committees will conduct all meetings via ZOOM.
- b) Members are encouraged to join the meeting at least 5 minutes prior to the start of the meeting to avoid any unnecessary disruption.
- c) Members will be muted unless speaking (to remove background noise) and they should indicate that they wish to speak by raising their hand,

virtual hand or advising the Chairman at the beginning of the Agenda item that they wish to speak

- d) To accommodate Cllrs who may be joining by audio - Additional wording to Standing Order 3i - For those persons using audio only, they should make the Chairman aware that they wish to speak
- e) A member in remote attendance will be deemed to have left the meeting where, at any point in time during the meeting, any of the conditions for remote attendance at 4 a) are not met.
- f) Subject to 4 b) the Chairman may if appropriate
  - i) adjourn the meeting to permit conditions for remote attendance to be re-established
  - ii) count the number of councillors in attendance for the purpose of the quorum
- g) Where a member is unable to attend a meeting, apologies will be submitted and received in the usual way.
- h) A member in remote attendance is present and counted for the purposes of the quorum when they can:
  - i) hear and where practicable see other members of the council
  - ii) Members are asked to ensure they are in a place with as little background noise as possible. Once checks have been carried out to ensure that everyone in attendance can be heard, all those in attendance are asked to "mute" their microphones until such a time as they are ready to speak.

## **5) Remote Access to Meetings for Members of the Public**

- a) Members of the public wishing to speak at meetings must email the clerk requesting access no later than 12.00pm on the day of the meeting. The clerk will provide members of the public with an electronic invitation and meeting password to gain entry to the meeting.
- b) Members of the public will enter a "waiting room" on Zoom and wait for the Clerk to approve their attendance. It would be helpful if members of the public could "name their videos" so that the Chair and Clerk can refer to them correctly.
- c) All attendees will be muted on entry to the meeting.
- d) Members of the public will be able to make representation during public participation.
- e) The required standards of behaviour and discussion are the same whether in remote or face-to-face meetings. Members of the public who use or display inappropriate or offensive language and/or behaviour will be removed from the meeting to the waiting room. This includes any inappropriate backdrops on display on the video.

- f) All public participants will be muted and only able to participate during the allotted time on the agenda. If necessary, fair warning will be given by the Chairman to mute a participant or remove them from the meeting.
- g) Access will be open to the public by remote means including video conferencing, live webcasting and interactive streaming where possible.  
If the Council becomes aware that the council's technology has failed, and the meeting is no longer accessible to the public, the meeting shall be adjourned.
- h) If public access cannot be restored within a reasonable period, the remaining business shall be deferred to a future meeting.

## **6) Remote Voting**

Unless a recorded vote is demanded, the Chair will take the vote by :

- a) confirmation of the meeting that there is agreement or
- b) a roll call and the number of votes for or against the motion or amendment or abstaining will be recorded
- c) Accommodate Cllrs by audio - This may be by show of hands or by using electronic voting facilities as long as persons present can see the voting of others, or if there are persons using audio only, a named vote can be undertaken by the Chairman or the Clerk. Addition to Standing Order 3S

## **7) Code of Conduct**

- a) councillors excluded from the meeting: -  
Where a councillor is required to leave the room as a requirement of the Council's code of conduct, the means of remote attendance and access will be severed whilst any discussion or vote take place.
- b) All present, whether Members or the Public, are reminded of the need to treat each other with respect. Members are reminded of the need to observe the Council's Code of Conduct

## **8) Exclusion of the press and public**

- a) Where the council has resolved to exclude the press and public from any part of the meeting, due to the confidentiality of the business to be discussed then:
- b) The means of remote attendance and access to the meeting by members of the press and public will be severed
- c) Each councillor present shall declare that there are no other persons present who are not entitled to be (hearing or seeing), and/or recording the meeting.

## **9) Minutes**

- a) Minutes will be approved at meetings and signed at the first physical meeting of the Council
- b) Zoom permits recording of meetings. The Clerk will advise Council to record so she/he can check the accuracy of the minutes only. The recording of minutes will subsequently be destroyed.

Adopted: 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2020  
Minute No's: OC5/20 & OC10/20