DRAUGHTON PARISH COUNCIL

**Standing Orders – Addendum 2020**

**Remote Meetings**

**INTRODUCTION**

The following Standing Orders are an addendum to the Standing Orders (SOs) for Draughton Parish Council (the Council) to enable the effective management of meetings held remotely due to the Coronavirus pandemic; in all other matters, the SOs of the Council dated apply.

**CONVENING**a. A remote meeting of the Council or of one of its committees will be convened in accordance with Paragraph 10 of the Local Government Act 1972.

b. The council will ensure that all non-confidential meeting papers are posted on its website and where possible, on the website of the principal authority for its district area.

**CHAIMAN’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.

**PRESENT**

Councillors are deemed present for the purposes of any remote meeting, when they can speak, hear, and be heard (and where practicable see and be seen) by all those in attendance (whether by video conferencing or by telephone).

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.

**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.

**COUNCIL/COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

The rules of debate as set out in SOs will apply.
Procedures for discussion of items on the agenda are as follows:

* Members present by video will make it known to the chairman that they wish to contribute to the discussion by using the ‘raise my hand’ facility on the remote meeting platform.
* Members joining the meeting by audio link only will be given an opportunity, by name in turn, by the chairman to contribute.
* Each member will state their name before providing their contribution to the debate.

**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.

Procedures for voting in remote meeting are as follows:

* Members present by video will vote by show of hands.
* Members present by audio link only will be invited by the chairman, by name in turn, to cast their vote orally
* The chairman will confirm each oral response.
* The clerk will note and read out all votes cast once collected on conclusion of the vote.

The minutes will record the decision of the Council.

**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.

The Council’s SOs will apply and any member with a DPI will be required to leave the meeting during discussion and voting on the matter in question (unless a dispensation has been granted). The clerk will contact the member to invite them to rejoin the meeting when the next item on the agenda is to be discussed.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The Council’s SOs will apply where possible and public participation at a remote meeting will be facilitated.

The following procedures will be followed:

* The chairman will ask each member of the public present at the meeting by video or audio link if they wish to raise any matters during the meeting.
* At the chairman’s discretion, when members of the public are permitted to contribute during a debate, those joining the meeting by video link shall use the ‘raise my hand facility’ or physically raise their hand – the clerk will make a note of these and they will be invited to speak by the chairman.

If so stated on the notice convening the meeting, or otherwise at the discretion of the chairman, meetings may be held without inviting public participation. In such circumstances, the Council’s SOs in respect of public participation will be disapplied, and the public will be offered the opportunity to observe proceedings only.

**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.

If a resolution is passed by the Council to this effect, all present will be asked to leave the meeting, and the confidential business will be considered by the members only meeting remotely via a new link.

This will be a continuation of the original meeting; the original meeting has not ended until the confidential business is dealt with.

Decisions made during the ‘confidential’ part of the meeting will be recorded in the meeting minutes.