

# REMOTE MEETINGS PROTOCOL

## **NORTHLEACH WITH EASTINGTON TOWN COUNCIL**

### **ADDENDUM TO STANDING ORDERS**

#### **1. General**

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 enable local councils to hold remote meetings [1].

These regulations remain in force until 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021, unless repealed earlier, and require a number of temporary additions and changes to Standing Orders.

This Protocol should be read in conjunction with the Council's Standing Orders.

Where there is a conflict between Standing Orders and legislation, these Remote Meetings Protocol takes precedence in relation to any remote meeting.

#### **2. Remote Attendance**

Persons attending a council meeting do not need to be in the same place.

A member in remote attendance attends the meeting at any time if the member is able at that time:

- 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.

A councillor in remote attendance will be deemed to have left the meeting where, at any point in time during the meeting, the above conditions are not met.

Subject to the above the Chairman may if appropriate adjourn the meeting to permit conditions for remote attendance to be re-established.

#### **3. Public Access to Meetings**

Where a meeting is accessible to the public through remote means, the meeting is open to the public whether or not members of the public are able to attend.

'Accessible to the public' includes access to the meeting by remote means including interactive video conference, and live webcasting or streaming.

The method of remote access for the press and public will be advertised on the meeting's agenda.

#### **4. Remote Voting**

Voting at remote meetings will be carried out by:

- a) a show of hands (if all members can be seen); or
- b) by a roll call of councillors' names asking them to state their vote for, against, or if they wish to abstain; or
- c) by another method of voting, should a platform allow it.

#### **5. Exclusion 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 the discussion and vote take place.

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:

- a) The means of remote attendance and access to the meeting by members of the press and public will be severed.
- b) 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.

#### **End Notes:**

[1] The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020; In force between the dates of 4 April 2020 – May 2021

[2] National Association of Local Councils, Legal Briefing Note, August 2020.