

# St Erth Parish Council

## Remote Meetings Policy

From 4<sup>th</sup> April 2020 until 7<sup>th</sup> 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 Parish Council business can be maintained.

The Parish Council will use an appropriate platform (e.g. Zoom Pro) in order that the meeting is publicly available. The Clerk will assign co-hosting rights to the Chairman and anyone else as required during the meeting.

The meeting will be a formal Parish Council meeting and will be held using the agenda and summons which the Clerk will publish on the Council website in the normal timeframe. It will be governed by the usual Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and associated policies.

A code and link to the virtual meeting will be sent to all Councillors along with the Agenda. Any member of the press or public who wishes to attend can request the meeting details from the Clerk. For anyone that does not have internet access there is also the ability to dial into the meeting via telephone.

Attendees will collect in the Zoom 'waiting room' prior to the meeting and the Clerk as 'Host' will admit people to the meeting.

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 or unmute anyone who forgets. The Clerk will also have the ability to remove anyone deemed a nuisance at the Chairman's request.

All Councillor attendees will display their name in order for the public to be able to identify them. The Clerk can amend the names of participants if necessary.

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' functions will be disabled during the meeting except for the Hosts. If necessary, the Clerk or co-host, will display any documents required using their 'share screen' function.

As with meetings in the Vestry Rooms, 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 they're using a camera so that the Chairman can see.

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

All meeting participants should switch their mobile phones to silent and try to find a quiet location at home, where possible. 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.

The meeting will be recorded by the Clerk only for the purpose of preparing the Minutes and will be deleted when the Minutes have been drafted.

If a Councillor has technical problems and leaves the meeting, this will be recorded in the Minutes. If the Councillor then re-joins the meeting, this will also be noted in the Minutes.

These procedures were agreed under the Emergency Scheme of Delegation and will be ratified at the first virtual meeting of the Parish Council.

27<sup>th</sup> May 2020