



Business Continuity Operating Procedures

Democratic and elected Member protocols, March 2020

In acknowledgement of the ongoing pandemic and in order to ensure that the operations of the Council, whether statutory or in service of our community, the following protocols are adopted;

1. Town Council Meetings

1.1. In consideration;

- 1.1.1. that the statutory obligation to hold three meetings per year has been met in this Calendar year; *and*
- 1.1.2. of advice from Her Majesty's Government (HMG) to restrict unnecessary physical social interaction, and to be prepared for elective self-isolation in the event of a household member becoming symptomatic, or where there is a risk factor present in an individual; *and*
- 1.1.3. The Powers granted under the Localism Act 2011 to "do anything that individuals generally may do", which, in this context includes preparations to maintain operations and decision-making during the present crisis; *to*

1.2. Restrict any and all further holding of public Council Meetings, including meetings of committees, except where necessary to meet an urgent, time-sensitive matter, and to restrict the content of Agenda to the same;

1.3. Where a meeting is required, to hold minimum quorum meetings, permitting other members to attend by use of video- or teleconferencing capabilities;

1.4. To record and make available to the public recordings of such meetings;

1.5. To postpone the Annual Town Meeting until the latest possible time (which has to be during the month of May), and to reschedule only subject to Government advice on assemblies at that time.



2. Delegation of powers and decision-making

2.1. In recognition of:

- 2.1.1. The powers provided to the Proper Officer/RFO to undertake spending under the existing Financial Regulations; and
- 2.1.2. Existing practice within the Environment and Planning Committee, which provides clear precedent;

2.2. To permit the Town Clerk or Director of Operations or such and other officer as has relevant delegated powers under the Scheme of Delegation, to undertake necessary decisions for the running of the Council or fulfilment of its powers or duties, whether statutory or assumed, subject to that officer seeking advice from no fewer than two elected Councillors, one of whom shall be either:

- 2.2.1. The Leader of the Council; *or*
- 2.2.2. The Chair of Council; *or*
- 2.2.3. The Chair of the committee in which Terms of Reference the specific matter would normally fall; *and*
- 2.2.4. Any other Councillor, preferably, but not exclusively of another political party;

2.3. To notify Councillors of any such decisions (which can be presented as a digest on a weekly basis);

2.4. To note or ratify any such decisions at a Council meeting at the earliest opportunity, without prejudice to Officers, and with due respect to Members who shall act on best endeavours;

2.5. In the event of the Proper Officer and Director of Operations being unavailable, and in the absence of confirmed delegation, to another Officer, The Leader of the Council, Chair of Council and one other Councillor, preferably from another political party, shall be empowered to appoint a temporary Officer to the same powers and duties.