

Willerby Parish Council Virtual Meeting Policy

January 2021

1. Introduction

The Willerby Parish Council recognises the opportunities offered by meeting virtually in times that a physical meeting is not appropriate, and has developed this policy to assist councillors, members of the public and press to understand how these meetings differ from a physical meeting and to assist people to engage in debate and decision making.

2. Publishing the agenda and providing documents

Councillors are to be summoned as per regulation with the agenda and documents being placed on the Council's website (and in local noticeboards if possible, although this is not mandatory)

3. Virtual Meeting 'platform'

The Willerby Parish Council will utilise Zoom to provide video communications. Zoom enables video and audio conferencing for persons using mobile devices, desktops, and fixed room systems.

In preparation for the meeting the Clerk to the Council will publish via the summons:

- *The Zoom meeting link*
- *Meeting ID*
- *Meeting passcode*

4. Standing Orders

Standing Orders will be used to guide the meeting in a similar way as if persons were present in a place.

5. Specific Virtual Meeting Arrangements

a. Discussions

This section applies if members are experiencing good connectivity. In the case of poor connectivity see 5c.

During the meeting members and officers will raise their hand to indicate to the Chairman that they wish to speak on an agenda item.

All members attending the meeting will monitor their own background noise.

b. Voting

All voting will be undertaken by a show of hands.

c. Poor connectivity

In the case of poor connectivity the Chairman will decide whether to continue with the meeting or to reconvene.

d. Attendance

If 'drop outs' result in the meeting becoming inquorate members will endeavour to rejoin for a period of 15 minutes. After 15 minutes if the meeting is still inquorate the

Chairman will suspend the meeting and reconvene at a later time and date subject to the statutory days of notice.

e. Telephone attendance

Persons wishing to attend by telephone are advised to contact the Clerk in advance in order that processes can be put in place to enable appropriate engagement.

6. Virtual Meeting Etiquette

Normal Standing Orders apply with regard to Conduct at Meetings and all attendees are expected to be mindful of the difficulties people experience with regard to the operation of technology.

Behaviour that is contrary to the intended outcomes of the meeting will be dealt with at the discretion of the Chairman. For a member of the public or press this may result in them being dismissed from the Zoom meeting.

7. Declaration of Interests

A councillor that has declared an interest that requires them to leave the meeting will be placed in the waiting room. On conclusion of the item for which the declaration is made the councillor will be returned to the meeting

8. Public Participation

During the meeting all persons other than members will be muted. During the 10 minute public participation period, members of the public will be required to 'enable video' in order for them to be visible to the Chairman and will raise their hand to indicate that they wish to speak. Their microphone will then be unmuted and they can address the meeting. Following the conclusion of their address the microphone will once again be muted.

Members of the public should be aware that the Public Forum is a listening process, and although questions may be asked, matters will be referred to a future agenda for a decision to be made.

Members of the public and press are asked to contact the Clerk 48 hours prior to a remote meeting to raise any issues or questions they may have in advance.

9. Confidential Matters

Confidential matters will be dealt with through a separate Zoom meeting that is available to members only. On conclusion of the non confidential matters on an agenda the meeting will be suspended for members to rejoin using the confidential zoom meeting link that will have been provided to members only.

10. Recording

Zoom meetings are not recorded or streamed online by Willerby Parish Council. Willerby Parish Council has no objection to Members, the press and Members of the Public recording or streaming any part of a meeting which the public are entitled to attend. Willerby Parish Council kindly request that anyone proposing to film, photograph, audio record or live stream a meeting notify the Chairman or Clerk in advance.