



# Harden Village Council

## Addendum to Standing Orders - Virtual Meetings

### **Introduction**

1. The following Standing Orders are an addendum to the Standing Orders for Harden Village Council to enable the effective management of meetings held remotely by video or telephone conference. In all other matters Harden Village Council's Standing Orders apply.
2. The Council is empowered to hold virtual meetings by The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

### **Convening**

3. A virtual meeting of the Council will be convened in accordance with Paragraph 10 of Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972.
4. The Council will ensure that all non-confidential meeting papers are posted on its website.
5. Details of how to join meetings by video or telephone will be included on the published meeting agenda. Members of the press and public will be required to contact the Clerk to obtain the meeting password.

### **Present**

6. Councillors are deemed present for the purposes of any virtual 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).
7. 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.
8. The meeting host, be that the Clerk or a Councillor, shall announce councillors present and state their name prior to commencement of the meeting.

## **Quorum**

9. 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.
10. 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.

## **Voting**

11. 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.
12. The Chair 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.
13. 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.
14. Where members are joining the meeting by telephone or video the Chair will request a response to each proposal, from each member present. Members attending by video may be asked to raise their hand. Members attending by telephone only will be asked for their response verbally.
15. The Chair will confirm the responses verbally and will read out all votes cast once collected. The minutes will reflect the decision of the council.

## **Council Discussion**

16. The rules of debate, as set out in Harden Village Council's Standing Orders will apply.
17. The Chair will ask members to indicate if they wish to speak by raising their hand (members using video) or state their name (members attending by telephone).
18. The Chair will invite members to speak in turn.
19. After each member has been heard, the Chair will call for a proposal on the item of business to be transacted, by a member present (member to state their name prior to making the proposal).
20. Once a proposal is moved, if required, the Chair will call for that proposal to be seconded by a member present (member to state their name prior to speaking).
21. The Chair will request any amendments to said proposal from each member present, prior to moving to a vote on that proposal.

## **Declarations of Interest in an Item of Business to be Transacted at the Meeting**

22. A councillor 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.
23. Where a Councillor has declared they have a disclosable pecuniary interest in an agenda item and they have not been granted a dispensation they will be moved to the 'waiting room' whilst that item is discussed and voted on. They will be returned to the meeting following the vote.
24. The meeting host, be that the Clerk or a Councillor, will verbally announce the removal and the return of the member concerned.

## **Public Participation**

25. The period of time designated for public participation at a meeting shall not exceed 15 minutes unless directed by the Chair of the meeting.
26. The Chair will ask each member of the public, joining the meeting by telephone, if they wish to contribute to this session.
27. Members of the public joining the meeting by video link shall physically raise their hand – the host of the meeting will make a note of these and they will be invited to speak by the Chair.

## **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

28. All meetings of the Council must be available for the press and public to attend (i.e. be open to the public).
29. The Council 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.
30. Where the Council resolves to exclude members of the press and public these members will be moved to the 'waiting room'.
31. The minutes will properly reflect the decision(s) of the Council taken in closed session.