**Cawood Parish Council**

**Proposal for Decision Making During the Coronavirus Emergency March 2020**

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**Introduction**

Following Government instruction banning public gatherings / meetings and in line with current guidelines for social distancing, the following **temporary measures** are to be put in place to ensure essential decision making is carried out by the Parish Council, in particular the payment of invoices received to ensure essential services are maintained.

These measures will be reviewed by the Council on a three monthly basis.

The measures are designed to avoid physical contact between Cllrs / the Clerk / the public, wherever possible. In exceptional circumstances where face to face contact is required, social distancing rules need to be observed (2 metre at least and washing hands thoroughly after contact).

Where the Chairman is not able to carry out their role due to illness, authority will be immediately delegated to the Deputy Chairman. Where the Clerk is not able to carry out their role due to illness, the Chairman will request a volunteer from Cllrs to stand in. Should the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Clerk or any councillors become ill they notify all asap. A phone contact number as well as email address should be provided and available to all.

Members of the public should be directed to use the Parish Council Website to keep up to date with communications and also be advised to email the Clerk to the Parish Council of urgent matters they wish to bring to the attention of Cllrs. (cawood.pclerk@gmail.com)

Cllrs should check their emails at least once a day.

1. Outstanding matters or new matters arising may be instigated by any Cllr or the Clerk and should be emailed to all Cllrs. as well as the Clerk.
2. Virtual Conference Call discussion between the Cllrs, will take place fortnightly between monthly Parish Council meetings, also held virtually, and can be used to ratify email decisions. The Chairman will ensure all Cllrs are engaged and given the opportunity to provide relevant comments and observations. Conference calls will not require an agenda or be open to the public. A summary report will be produced recording actions. Full meetings will be open to the public, by prior arrangement with the Clerk by email.
3. In between conference call discussions, if necessary, email decisions can be made which will be agreed by a majority vote of 5. This number assumes all Councillors are well and able to vote. The majority needed could be lowered in the event of Councillor illness. The discussion time frame will be 2 days during which time Cllr email approval will be requested by the Clerk or Chairman for the matter to be carried / actioned. Decisions will be later ratified at full Parish Council meetings.

**Monthly Financial Reporting**

1. The Clerk will provide a monthly financial report as normal to Cllrs via email giving Cllrs the opportunity to question and approve the finances.
2. The Clerk and Chairman will set up a mandate for internet banking to supersede the existing arrangements requiring cheque signage.

**Planning Matters**

1. Where planning applications are received during the emergency period, they can be decided at the full meeting where possible or decisions can be made at the conference call meeting and ratified during the next full Parish Council meeting. The Clerk will enrol the PC onto SDC Public Access.

**Monthly Minutes**

1. The monthly minutes will be kept electronically and published once approved by Councillors on the Parish Council website as well as a paper copy being placed in the main noticeboard if this can be done safely. These will require only an electronic signature by the Chair.
2. Financial Records and Planning Applications should be published as normal in the document.
3. The Clerk will maintain a separate electronic record of matters arising detailing matters, discussion, approval, action and outcome. Copies of the record should be made available to Cllrs at all times As such, all email communications resulting in a decision being taken will be kept in a separate folder during this temporary period by the Clerk.

Action agreed March 2020, ratified April 15th 2020, updated January 2021