

SILLOTH-ON-SOLWAY TOWN COUNCIL

Hybrid Meeting Procedure

From 4 April 2020 until May 2021, Town & Parish Councils were 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* ("the 2020 Regulations") to hold legal virtual meetings in order that Parish Council business could be maintained.

Due to increased public attendance at Town Council meetings, it was decided to start holding hybrid meetings, whereby members of the public could continue to access the Full Council meetings via Zoom.

The Town Council will be using the Zoom platform in order that the meeting is publicly available.

The Clerk will Host the meeting using the Town Council paid account.

Meetings will be formal Town Council meetings and will be held using the agenda and summons which the Clerk has published and are governed by the usual Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and associated policies.

A code and link to the hybrid meeting will be published on the agenda which will also go on the noticeboard, on the website and on social media in order that the public are able to attend via Zoom. As with all Council meetings, the public are also able to attend the meetings in person at the Community Hall in the usual manner.

Attendees will collect in the Zoom 'waiting room' prior to the meeting. As the 'Host', the Clerk will have the ability to mute or remove anyone deemed a nuisance at the Chairman's request.

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 anyone who forgets.

The Councillor attendees and staff will introduce themselves at the start of the meeting. Members of the public may introduce themselves if they should wish.

In order to protect participants from malware, the 'chat', file sharing and screen sharing function will be disabled during the meeting. If necessary, the Clerk will display any documents required using the 'share screen' function.

As with all meetings of the Council, 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.

Meeting 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.

Confidential or Exempt Items or Issues

When confidential, or "exempt" issues – as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – are under consideration, the 'waiting room' function may be used and members of the public attending the meeting via Zoom will be moved to that facility by the meeting Host.

Connection Problems

If, during the course of a Meeting, it becomes apparent that there are connection problems, the Meeting will be paused for a period of up to ten minutes to re-establish connection.

After the ten-minute period, if it has not been possible to re-establish connection, the meeting will resume.