

KIDSGROVE TOWN COUNCIL



Emergency Procedures Policy

December 2021

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1. Introduction

This policy is to ensure that the Council can continue to function in a lawful manner and ensuring essential matters are progressed in the event of external influences such as covid-19.

The policy ensures that any emergency procedures are both lawful and fit for purpose.

The Council and office should always operate in a manner which considers the need for implementation of factors such as remote working and ensure members and staff have training where required in readiness of the need to implement the policy. Cloud use and storage along with sufficient office laptops are essential to allow migration to staff working remotely from the office as and when required.

Some decisions, such as setting of budget and precept or election of a new chair (Mayor) if required cannot be delegated in any circumstance. The delegation schemes in this policy cannot override the need to remain lawful in all decision making.

2. Emergency Procedure Implementation

In the event of a situation arising which impacts significantly on the council's ability to operate, an extraordinary meeting of the Full Council will be called to resolve to implement one of the procedures outlined in this section.

In the event that it is not possible to call an extraordinary meeting, the clerk shall have delegated power to implement the policy and put into action one of the procedures in this section. The Clerk will also have delegated power to move the Council between the options in this section. This delegated power MUST be in consultation with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and both group leaders and evidence of this consultation must be retained.

a. Remote Meetings

Should the government introduce legislation to allow business to be conducted remotely through properly summoned committee and Council meetings, then this is can be implemented using the Council's meeting schedule as published.

b. Formation of an Emergency Committee to meet face to face.

In the event that it is possible, safe and felt appropriate that small groups of councillors can meet face to face, an emergency committee will be formed consisting of each group leader and two further councillors from each of the majority party and the opposition (nominated by the respective group leaders).

The committee will elect a chair and vice chair as the first item of business at the first meeting. The chair and vice should not be from the same political party.

The committee will have full delegated power to consider and agree any matters that Full Council can, except for those that cannot be delegated.

c. Delegation to the Clerk.

In the event it becomes not possible or is deemed unsafe to meet face to face, but legislation isn't in place to allow decision making at remote meetings, the clerk will be given delegated powers to make decisions for the Council, except for those which cannot be delegated.

The clerk will call remote 'informal' meetings if possible, using the existing schedule, where councillors can discuss issues. Notes from these meetings will be taken and retained for transparency but no decision making will take place.

The Clerk, in consultation with the chair of that committee or the Mayor, if a Full Council meeting, will make necessary decisions based on the discussion held.

If an 'informal' remote meeting isn't possible and a decision is required, the clerk will make the decision after consultation with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and both group leaders (assuming the decision isn't normally delegated to the Clerk through other policies).

Note – if consultation with one or more of the named members isn't possible, and an emergency decision is required, the Clerk can use existing emergency powers.

To be reviewed annually.

Review Date: January 2023