

FREATHERNE WITH SAUL PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Meeting Protocol

Adopted: September 2018

Review date: September 2019

Participation in the Open Forum

This Council meets and makes its decisions in public and is committed to community engagement and therefore warmly invites members of the public, the press, the police and district and local councillors to attend meetings and contribute within the open forum. A council meeting is not a public meeting; it is a meeting held in public and there is no requirement in law to provide an opportunity for the public to question the council, but this council welcomes the opportunity to offer it.

Members of the public are asked to respect the fact that this is a meeting to conduct council business and interruptions during council business are not permitted. If, in the opinion of the Chairman, the business of the meeting is disrupted in any way, the Chairman will ask the person/s causing the disruption to be quiet and if they refuse then ask them to leave.

Mobile phones must be switched to silent during the meeting.

Public participation is permitted regarding items on any topic within the remit of the Parish Council. Written questions received in advance of the meeting are encouraged but not essential: if provided in advance this will make it easier for an answer to be prepared. The council will not enter into any substantive discussion on a question raised if it is unable to answer a question directly. If members of the public are unsure whether a question is within the remit of the Parish Council, then the Clerk will be able to answer this.

Public participation will be for a maximum period of 20 minutes and will take place at the start of each meeting so that councillors may take into account views expressed when reaching decisions. If a question relates to a topic on the agenda then the Chair may decide to address it immediately or carry it forward for a response at a later date.

Members of the public should note that the Council is only allowed to take decisions on topics that are publicised on the agenda, excepting items delegated to the Clerk.

Agenda items may be suggested no later than 1 week before each Parish Council meeting.

All communication at meetings shall be through the Chair. Councillors may not address questions raised by members of the public except through and with the permission of the Chair. Members of the public may not address individual councillors except through, and with the permission of the Chair. Councillors and members of the public must respect the role of the Chair and may be asked to leave if in the opinion of the Chair they breach this protocol in a way that disrupts the orderly conduct of the meeting.

FWS Council will provide an opportunity via the agenda for the police and ward councillors to attend and report to meetings and respond to any questions or queries from Council.

The Chair may, at their discretion, invite a member of the public to speak on an agenda item during the Parish Council meeting if, in the opinion of the Chair, that individual has relevant information not available to the Parish Council which will help in its deliberations.

Recording and Filming of Council Meetings

The right to record, film and to broadcast meetings of the council, committees and sub committees is established following the Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014. This is in addition to the rights of the press and public to attend such meetings.

Meetings or parts of meetings from which the press and public are excluded may not be filmed or recorded.

Members of the public are permitted to film or record meetings to which they are permitted access in a non-disruptive manner.

The use of digital and social media recording tools, for example Twitter, blogging or audio recording shall be allowed as long as it is carried out in a non-disruptive way and only to the extent that it does not interfere with any person's ability, even where he or she has a disability, to follow the debate.

While those attending meetings are deemed to have consented to the filming, recording or broadcasting of meetings, those exercising the rights to film, record and broadcast must respect the rights of other people attending under the Data Protection Act 1998.

The Chair of the meeting has the authority to stop a meeting and take appropriate action if any person contravenes these principles or is deemed to be recording in a disruptive manner.

Any person or organisation choosing to film, record or broadcast any meeting of the Council is responsible for any claims or other liability from them so doing.

The Council asks those recording proceedings not to edit the film or recording in a way that could lead to misinterpretation of the proceedings, or infringe the core values of the Council. This includes refraining from editing an image or views expressed in a way that may ridicule, or show lack of respect towards those being filmed or recorded.

The Council will display these requirements as to filming, recording and broadcasting at its meeting venues and those undertaking these activities will be deemed to have accepted them whether they have read them or not.

The Council may itself photograph, film, record or broadcast meetings and can retain, use or dispose of such material in accordance with its retention and disposal policies.

Code of Conduct

Members of the Parish Council are bound by a Code of Conduct which sets out the standards of conduct that are expected when they are acting in that capacity, and in so doing providing the openness and accountability necessary to reinforce public confidence in the way in which Members perform those activities.

The rules of conduct include:

Do treat others with respect and courtesy;

Do not do anything which may cause the Authority to breach any of its equality duties (in particular as set out in the Equality Act 2010);

Do not bully any person;

Do not anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the Authority;

Do not use or attempt to use your position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage;

Do not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute.

Members are required to register their interests and, where it is required or appropriate to do so, should always declare any relevant interest in any proceeding of the Council and follow the relevant procedure, dependent upon the nature of the interest.