# COLSTERWORTH AND DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL

**CAD Remote Meeting Protocol**

## Introduction

The High Court ruled on 28 April 2021 that virtual council meetings could not lawfully take place after 6 May 2021. This means that primary legislation would be required to restore the powers to hold virtual meetings in the future. This procedure has therefore, been suspended pending future changes to primary “legislation".

On the 4 April 2020, the government brought The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 into force to allow local authorities to conduct meetings remotely.

## Remote meetings platform

Colsterworth and District Parish Council uses the remote meetings platform “Zoom Pro” for its remote meetings. The Zoom Pro subscription also offers a “dial in” feature where participants can join meetings over the phone, which will enable those who do not use or have access to the internet to take part in Parish Council meetings.
Participants using the telephone dial-in option may be charged for the call. We recommend participants check with their telephone provider beforehand.

## Meeting security

The clerk will generate a new, unique meeting ID and passcode for each remote meeting. The meeting ID for each meeting will be published on the Parish Council website alongside the agenda. In order to prevent “trolls” from disrupting the meeting, members of the public will be advised to contact the clerk directly to request the passcode for that meeting. This is so that anyone wishing to attend the meeting can be identified as a genuine parishioner, before being allowed access to the meeting. The clerk will also enable a waiting room for each meeting and participants must wait until they are admitted the meeting by the host (clerk). The clerk will have the ability to deny access to any accounts suspected of being trolls. Before denying access to suspicious accounts, the clerk will notify the Chair, who may be able to identify participants by account name, although all members of the public should have contacted the clerk first to receive the passcode. Only the (host) clerk will have the ability the share their screen during the meeting.

## Before a meeting

Agendas, remote meeting dates, and start times will be advertised on the Parish Council Website in accordance with usual timeframes as laid out in legislation. The agenda and meeting papers will be emailed out to Parish Councillors, District and County Councillors as usual, as well as the Zoom meeting link, meeting ID and passcode. In order to keep the meeting secure, councillors will be asked not to share joining instructions with anyone else.
Members of the public who wish to attend the meeting over the internet or by phone dial-in must contact the clerk directly to request the meeting passcode. The clerk can be reached at clerk@colsterworthanddistpc.co.uk or 01476 861888 (office hours only please)”.

## How to join a meeting

Members of the public will find the meeting ID, and teleconferencing numbers for dial-in, on the agenda page of the Parish Council website. All members of the public must contact the clerk beforehand by email (https://colsterworth.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/) or telephone (01476 861888 – office hours only please) to request the meeting passcode or they will not be able to join the meeting (see Meeting security above). We ask members of the public not to share the passcode with anyone else in order to maintain the security of the meeting, and to ensure that genuine parishioners are not unnecessarily denied access to the meeting. If you believe you are going to be late joining the meeting, please try to notify the clerk or a councillor beforehand.

**Joining using the Zoom app.**

Members of the public can join meetings using the Zoom app on their computer, laptop, or mobile device, by opening the app, and inputting the meeting ID and passcode when prompted. When joining a meeting using Zoom, please make sure you have entered your full name (first and second name) when requested, so that you can be clearly identified by the host (clerk), and granted access to the meeting. For the same reason, please make sure you are not signed in under a family member's account name as this can cause confusion. Any accounts trying to join with unrecognisable or otherwise suspicious account names may be denied access to the meeting.

**Joining using teleconference dial-in**

If you wish to join the meeting by telephone it is very important to notify the clerk of this fact when requesting the meeting passcode, as you will not have the ability to display a name when you join the meeting (only a phone number), and we may not be able to identify you and subsequently allow you access to the meeting. To join the meeting using telephone dial-in, simply dial one of the UK teleconferencing numbers listed on the Parish Council website, and when prompted enter the relevant meeting ID and passcode that the clerk has provided. If asked to enter a participant ID number, just press # to skip this step. Please note, telephone operators may charge for the call.

**Meeting Management:**

Upon joining a meeting, the host (clerk) will have automatically muted your microphone. Please ensure your video is enabled (by clicking start video) if it is not already enabled automatically.

The Chair will remind everyone present to ensure that their microphone is on mute and that their video is enabled.

The Chair will formally open the meeting, and confirm if there are any members of the public present, and ask them if they wish to speak during the public session. Any members of the public wishing to speak during the public session will raise their hand if video is enabled. If video is not enabled they can use the raise hand button to show that they wish to speak. If anyone has joined by telephone dial-in, the host (clerk) will unmute them, and the Chair will ask them directly if they wish to speak during the public forum.

One at a time, the Chair will invite members of the public to speak, and the clerk will un-mute their microphones while they speak. Once they have finished speaking their microphones will be muted again.

The usual standing orders regarding public participation will apply to remote meetings, and these can be found on the Policies page of the Parish Council website.

Members of the public are reminded that the total amount of time permitted for all public participation shall not exceed 10 minutes.

Steps will be taken if the conduct of any participant (including councillors and members of the public) is deemed to be obstructive, offensive, or improper (see Standing Order 8: Rules of Debate and Conduct at Meetings). The host (clerk) will have the ability to remove any participants who behave in such a manner and who do not modify their conduct when requested to do.

The Chair will then work through the agenda supported by the clerk as required. If required, the clerk may use screen sharing, for example to share drawings for planning applications. No other participants will be allowed to share their screen, unless granted permission by the Chair.

If a Councillor has declared an interest in an item to be discussed they will be placed in a meeting room. When that item has been concluded the Chair/clerk admit the Councillor concerned back into the meeting.

In order for a Councillor to make a point regarding an item under discussion they should raise their hand, and wait for the Chair to invite them to speak. The clerk will un-mute their microphone and mute it again after they have made their point. If any Council member has joined via teleconferencing, the Chair will invite them to speak before moving to a proposal.

When a proposal and formal vote is required the Chair will ask the meeting and look for a councillor who has raised their hand, the Chair will invite that Councillor to state their name and the proposal. The Chair will then ask for a Councillor to second the proposal and look for a Councillor who has raised their hand. The Chair will state the name of the Councillor who has seconded the proposal. The Chair will then ask all Councillors in favour of the motion to raise their hands and to keep them raised until he asks them to lower their hands. The Chair will ask councillors joining via teleconferencing to give their vote audibly. The Chair will confirm the number of Councillors voting in favour. The Chair will then repeat for any Councillor not in favour or who wants to abstain.

Standing Orders will continue to be used to assist with the good management of a meeting.

For any confidential matters, there will be a separate Zoom meeting ID and passcode which will not be shared with the public. Confidential items are usually discussed at the very end of the meeting agenda. Once discussion of all other agenda items have been concluded, the chair will inform all participants that the public part of the meeting is concluded, and that the press and public will be excluded from the confidential part of the meeting. The host (clerk) will end the public meeting, and the clerk and all council members will then log into the confidential meeting using the separate Zoom meeting ID and passcode provided.

Document Control and Policy Review:

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| Adopted at Colsterworth and District Parish Council Meeting: | Date: 6th February 2024 |
| Chairman: | Caroline Hainsworth |
| Responsible Officer/Clerk | Sue Grant |
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| Adopted at Colsterworth and District Parish Council Meeting: | Date: 1st February 2023 |
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| Chairman: | Caroline Hainsworth |
| Responsible Officer/Clerk | Sue Grant |
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