

WHITTINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

APRIL 2020 AGENDA / UPDATE

On 24 March 2020, NALC and the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) issued a joint letter asking local councils to stop holding any physical meetings or gatherings during the Coronavirus outbreak. This includes full council, committee meetings, annual parish or council meetings.

In accordance with the above and the advice issued by Central Government, Whittingham Parish Council will not be meeting in April due to the Coronavirus outbreak.

The letter confirms that the Government is working on a Coronavirus Bill which will allow Council meetings to be held remotely and to take decisions without the need for physically meeting. The SLCC website confirms the Coronavirus Act 2020 has been passed and Section 78 gives the Secretary of State powers that the Government can remove the need for the Annual Council Meeting and allow "virtual" meetings. The power to create regulations lasts until May 2021.

In the absence of Government Guidance on how virtual meetings can take place, Councils may take decisions by email for truly urgent issues. In this case, local councils should evidence their decision making as best they can, for example by asking Councillors to confirm their votes by email to the clerk for the clerk to keep as a record of the decision.

It is hoped that NALC and SLCC will release further details on how to hold virtual meetings during April but the Clerk is currently looking at media sites such as Zoom.

As the Coronavirus Act allows Council meetings to be held remotely and allows Councils to make decisions without the need for physically meeting, the Clerk has produced an Agenda / update for April to reassure Members that work is still being completed and processed in accordance with statutory responsibilities.

Under MIN 20/131 of the March meeting, Members RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Parish Council would be on **Monday 6th April**.

With regards to decision making, Members are required to acknowledge receipt of the Agenda / Update by email on or before Monday 6th April.

In their acknowledgement, Members are also requested to

- a) Confirm the use of Goosnargh Tree Services to crown and thin the Parish Council trees at Cumeragh Play area
- b) confirm their agreement to the expenditure items listed under Accounts for Payment
- c) authorise the Clerk to pay the invoices by BACS thereby reducing the requirement for cheques to be circulated for signature.