

BUSINESS CONTINUATION POLICY

Approved: 5th May 2021

Approved: 14th May 2024

1. Introduction

Rusper Parish Council recognises the importance of producing and maintaining a Business Continuity Plan for implementation in the event of disruptions to the day to day running of the council. This policy has been written specifically as a plan to cope with the potential for business interruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This Policy applies with immediate effect and ends by agreement of full Council at the first available meeting.

This Policy overrides the Standing Orders, Financial Regulations or any other policy adopted by Rusper Parish Council where there is any conflict.

2. Meetings

From 7th May 2021, meetings may no longer be held remotely. Meetings are subject to cancellation if:

- They would contravene advice given by Government, Public Health England, the National Association of Local Councils, West Sussex County Council or Horsham District Council; or
- Members do not feel comfortable meeting in a face-to-face environment. This decision should be made taking into account the potential risks to councillors, staff and members of the public; or
- Not enough Members are available to make a quorum.

A decision to cancel a meeting will be made by the Clerk in consultation with the relevant Chairman and where possible will be circulated by email to Members by 5pm on the day of the meeting. This will also be communicated on the website and social media. Where possible a sign will be put on the door of Rusper Village Hall.

Rusper Parish Council is committed to resuming face-to-face meetings as soon as it is safely possible.

3. Decision making process and delegated authority

Rusper Parish Council endeavours to make its decision-making process as open and democratic as possible. To enable the continuation of business when public meetings are not possible, all decisions are delegated to the Clerk except those which are specifically prohibited by legislation. The following process will be followed:

- The Clerk will email to councillors a list of decisions that need to be made and ask for their views by a certain date. These views can be given by email, telephone or video call.
- Members who do not respond by the specified date risk their view not being taken into account.
- All decisions will be posted on the website, social media and where possible in Rusper Parish News.
- Any decisions that are significant (for example new projects, expenditure in excess of budgeted amounts or anything with high public interest) will be adjourned until face-to-face meetings can resume.

4. Payments

In agreement with the Clerk and Chairman (if the Chairman is unavailable another Member will be nominated by the Clerk), the following payments may be authorised:

- Payment of invoices up to a maximum amount of £2000
- Purchase of equipment up to a maximum amount of £500
- Payment of salaries and employee expenses, not exceeding the budgeted amounts
- Payment of grants, donations or subscriptions up to a maximum amount of £250

6. Loss of Clerk

Should the Clerk become either temporarily or permanently unavailable, the Chairman will be notified as soon as possible. The Chairman will notify all Members and a replacement will be sought immediately. The Chairman has access to all passwords and documents to enable a swift handover.