

St Erme Parish Council



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29th April 2020

REPORT

Please see below a report in relation to the remote meeting of St Erme Parish Council to be held on Tuesday 5th May 2020.

The press and members of the public are able to view the agenda and this report on the council's website at www.stermeparishcouncil.org.uk and forward any views or comments to be considered by e-mail to clerk@stermeparishcouncil.org.uk by 5.00pm on **Monday 4th May 2020**.

Agenda Item 5(a)

Finance:

a) To receive the previously agreed 'Statement of Accounts for April 2020'

The accounts previously agreed for payment are as follows:

Payments to be approved for April 2020 to be paid by internet banking by the Clerk							
Name	Details of payment	Cost	VAT	Total	Delegated By	Paid By	Actioned Date
Mrs S Trethewey	Expenses - See Expense Sheet	£ 58.00		£ 58.00	Members	On-line payment	
Playsafety Limited	ROSPA Play Equipment Inspection	£ 147.50	£ 29.50	£ 177.00	Members	On-line payment	
Cornwall ALC Ltd	Annual Subscription	£ 453.08	£ 55.13	£ 508.21	Clerk	On-line payment	
M Pearson	Grass Verges 08.04.20	£ 185.00		£ 185.00	Members	On-line payment	
Printerland	Ink Toner	£ 199.00	£ 39.80	£ 238.80	Clerk	On-line payment	
Vision ICT Ltd	E-mail address host fee 2020/2021	£ 126.00	£ 25.20	£ 151.20	Members	On-line payment	
St Erme Playing Fields Ltd	Hire - 04.02.20	£ 12.50		£ 12.50	Members	On-line payment	
Lyreco UK Ltd	Stationary	£ 32.35	£ 6.47	£ 38.82	Clerk	On-line payment	
Sage UK	Payroll	£ 7.00	£ 1.40	£ 8.40	Members	Direct Debit	
O2	Mobile Phone	£ 11.81	£ 2.36	£ 14.17	Members	Direct Debit	
Mrs S Trethewey	Salary Month 1				Members	On-line payment	
Mr G Brunsdon	Salary Month 1				Members	On-line payment	
	TOTAL PAYMENTS			£ 2,582.45			
Signed							
Clerk	S Trethewey						
Date							
Deposit Account	£	26,908.62					
Current Account	£	20,980.78					
Total	£	47,889.40					
O/S Cheques	-£	1,838.39					
Bank Balance 31.03.20	£	46,051.01					
April Payments	-£	2,582.45					
Total	£	43,468.56					

Agenda Item 6

6) Governance

- a) To resolve to adopt the supplementary 'Standing Orders' to meet the statutory requirements for the holding of remote meetings, and this lasts until May 7th, 2021 or the repeal of legislation whichever is the earlier**

The following 'Supplementary 'Standing Orders' have been advised by CALC to meet the statutory requirements for the holding of remote meetings as follows:

These Protocol and Procedures should be read in conjunction with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

The Regulations made under s78 of Coronavirus Act 2020 apply and where there is a conflict between these and any other adopted standing orders or legislation, these Remote Meetings Procedures take precedence in relation to any remote meeting.

1) Annual Meeting

- a) The requirement to hold an Annual Meeting of the Council is to be disregarded and prior to May 7th, 2021 may only take place
 - i) where called by the Chair or
 - ii) following a resolution calling for an annual meeting being passed at an ordinary or extra ordinary meeting of the Council.

2) Access to Information

- a) Where a document is required to be 'open to inspection' this shall include published on the website of the council.
- b) Where a document is required to be published and made available at the council's offices, this shall include published on the website of the council.
- c) Where there is a requirement to publish information including public notices, agendas, minutes, background papers and written reports, this shall include published on the website of the council.

3) Remote Access to Meetings

- a) The definition of meeting within the Council's standing orders is amended so that
 - i) 'place' includes where a meeting is held, or to be held in more than one place including electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers
 - ii) 'open to the public' includes access to the meeting by remote means including video conferencing, live webcasting and interactive streaming
 - iii) where a meeting is accessible to the public through remote means, the meeting is open to the public whether or not members of the public are able to attend the meeting in person.

- b) If the Council becomes aware that its technology has failed, and the meeting is no longer accessible to the public, the meeting shall be adjourned.
- c) If public access cannot be restored within a reasonable period, the remaining business shall be deferred to a future meeting.

4) Councillors in Remote Attendance

- a) A councillor in remote attendance is present and counted for the purposes of the quorum when they can:
 - i) hear and where practicable see other members of the council
 - ii) hear and where practicable see members of the public wishing to participate during the public session of the meeting or as invited by the Chairman
- b) A councillor in remote attendance will be deemed to have left the meeting where, at any point in time during the meeting, any of the conditions for remote attendance at 4 a) are not met.
- c) Subject to 4 b) the Chairman may if appropriate
 - i) adjourn the meeting to permit conditions for remote attendance to be re-established
 - ii) count the number of councillors in attendance for the purpose of the quorum

5) Remote attendance by members of the public

- a) A member of the public is in remote attendance when they can :
 - i) hear and where practicable see and so be heard and where practicable seen by members of the council at the meeting
 - ii) hear and where practicable see and so be heard and where practicable seen by other members of the public attending the meeting including those wishing to speak during the public session or as invited by the Chairman
- b) A member of the public in remote attendance will be deemed to have left the meeting where, at any point in time during the meeting, any of the conditions for remote attendance at 5 a) are not met.
- c) Subject to 5 b) the Chairman may if appropriate
 - i) adjourn the meeting to permit conditions for remote attendance to be re-established
 - ii) vary the order of the agenda or complete the remaining business of the meeting in the absence of the member of the public in remote attendance.

6) Remote Voting

Unless a recorded vote is demanded, the Chair will take the vote by :

- a) confirmation of the meeting that there is agreement or
- b) a roll call and the number of votes for or against the motion or amendment or abstaining will be recorded.

7) Code of Conduct – councillors excluded from the meeting

Where a councillor is required to leave the room as a requirement of the Council's code of conduct, the means of remote attendance and access will be severed whilst any discussion or vote take place.

8) Exclusion of the press and public

Where the council has resolved to exclude the press and public from any part of the meeting, due to the confidentiality of the business to be discussed then :

- a) The means of remote attendance and access to the meeting by members of the press and public will be severed
- b) Each councillor present shall declare that there are no other persons present who are not entitled to be (hearing or seeing), and/or recording the meeting.

6) Governance

- (b) To resolve to adopt the supplementary 'Financial Regulations' to be able to take any actions necessary with associated expenditure and electronic payments to protect the interests of the community and ensure council business continuity during the period of the Coronavirus pandemic as previously resolved**

1) Delegation of Expenditure

That the council delegates authority to the clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (or a second member of the council) to take any actions necessary with associated expenditure to protect the interests of the community and ensure council business continuity during the period of the Coronavirus pandemic, informed by consultation with the members of the council.

2) Payments and On-line Banking

That the council authorise the clerk to register to Lloyds for on-line banking as single Full Access user of the council's accounts during the period of the pandemic Coronavirus. Any electronic payments will be authorised by a schedule of payments that will be circulated and approved by members of the council by e-mail, for clerk to arrange payment electronically.

Agenda Item 8

8) To review the council's Annual Insurance cover as set out in the report.

The Insurance renewal is due on 1st June 2020 and we are currently in a 3 year long term agreement with Came & Company. The long term agreement is due to expire on 31st May 2021, when we will obtain quotations in-line with our Standing Orders.

The insurance review has been carried out in line with our Risk Management Policy and in relation to our Asset Register.

Proposed cover for 2020/2021

Public Liability	£10,000,000
Employer's Liability	£10,000,000
Officials Indemnity	£500,000
Employee Dishonesty	£150,000
Fidelity	£150,000
Personal Accident (Capital Benefit)	£100,000
Libel & Slander	£500,000
Legal Expenses	£500,000
All Risks –	
Office, street furniture, play equipment, laptop	Gates & Fences £3,214.00
	Office Contents £2,000.00
	Playground Equipment £64,000.00
	Sports Equipment £25,210.00
	Street Furniture £22,000.00
Data Protection	£500,000
Long Term Agreement 3rd year of a 3 years)(PA) Premium	£782.30

Agenda Item 9

- 9) To receive guidance from the Cornwall Association of Local Clerk's and new legislation to consider the purchase of software to be able to hold 'Virtual' video conferencing meetings in the future and to consider any associated risks

The software must allow for public access to the meeting. It must also provide an option for telephone participation for members who for whatever reason do not have access the internet. We may need to look at a way to include telephone call access or an alternative.

There are a variety of packages available and the Local Government Association has produced some guidance which compares the different options available and highlights the pros and cons of each platforms.

The two most popular software apps currently used by other agencies are:

Microsoft Teams and Zoom

Installation requirements for Microsoft Teams

- A device (laptop, tablet or phone with internet access and camera for video calls)
- Microsoft 365 account

Available packages

- Microsoft 365 Business Basic - £3.80 per month
- **Microsoft 365 Business Standard - £9.40 (New package names as of 21 April 2020)**

Number of participants

The maximum at the moment is 250 of people in one Teams meeting. This goes regardless of application (web or desktop) or whether the attendees are guests or users.

Pros

- Teams increases productivity by making all your collaboration– conversations, chats, online meetings, shared files, tasks, etc. available in one single app and one single interface
- Integrates with Outlook
- Screen sharing available within the app
- Live events would enable councils to present audio, video or a screen to a live event, with a Q&A function. These can be private or public. If public, residents could watch the event live or on-demand, either anonymously or authenticated.

Cons

- **Does not allow external users to call into a meeting via phone with base version**
- Requires a strong and stable internet connection
- The common law powers of the Chair, usually reflected in standing orders, to deal with disruptive behaviour applies to a virtual meeting as to a real one, including the power to exclude disruptive individuals and even the public generally if the disruption prevents the committee from discharging its statutory functions. Technical advice should be sought as to how to do this virtually and the powers should of course be exercised in a reasonable and proportionate manner

Accessibility functions

- Blur background
- Customize the reading and viewing experience for different visual and cognitive needs
- Have documents read aloud and broken down by syllables with Immersive Reader
- Dark, light and high contrast themes
- Compatible with assistive technologies

Translation tools

Has an inline message translation feature that enables users to translate Teams messages into the language specified by their personal language settings for Office 365.

Security and transparency

Teams enforces team-wide and organisation-wide two-factor authentication, single sign-on through Active Directory, and encryption of data in transit and at rest.

Councils using this platform

- **LB Waltham Forest held a planning meeting on 31 March 2020 using Teams.**
- Buckinghamshire Council now holding all its meetings successfully using Microsoft Teams.
- Internal LGA use

Suitable for council meetings

- Could be suitable for council meetings
- Some users have said they have found the functionality complex at times so users may need to watch a tutorial/explainer
- There are plenty of virtual/video tutorials available
- Live events function would be suitable for public council meetings.

Installation requirements for Zoom

Go to Zoom.us, and sign up for free via work email (log in takes a captcha). Then have to click the confirmation email to begin to use Zoom.

So:

- a) need a laptop/computer with a microphone and webcam
- b) need internet
- c) need an email address both to sign up and to activate the account.

Available packages

- Basic - Free 40 mins limit on group meetings, unlimited 1-1 meetings
- **Pro - £11.99 per month, meeting duration 24hrs/ user management/ admin feature controls etc**
- Business - £15.99 per month, phone support/admin dash board. Managed domains/ company branding

Number of participants

- Basic and Pro packages: 100 participants
- Business: 300 participants
- Enterprise: 500 participants

Pros

- Simple set up, has online video “how to” tutorials for free
- The bigger packages include a dedicated customer success manager so would take the IT stress away from council officers
- Just need a meeting ID to join the call
- Offers “video webinar” that supports observers, ie the public for public meetings
- Particularly popular during the COVID-19 outbreak

Cons

- Most of the cons concern security and transparency
- Concerns around the public nature of people adding comments into a Zoom meeting i.e. inappropriate images/comment
- The common law powers of the Chair, usually reflected in standing orders, to deal with disruptive behaviour applies to a virtual meeting as to a real one, including the power to exclude disruptive individuals and even the public generally if the disruption prevents the committee from discharging its statutory functions. Technical advice should be sought as to how to do this virtually and the powers should of course be exercised in a reasonable and proportionate manner

Accessibility functions

- Has closed captioning, as Zoom integrates with third party closed captioning providers

- Has automatic transcripts – helpful for democratic service officers. Has keyboard accessibility, as Zoom supports keyboard shortcuts
- You can use Zoom without a screen, as it works with the latest screen readers

Translation tools

Has the ability to add an “interpreter” to the meeting, where a zoom user becomes the interpreter, and attendees can select which audio channel they prefer (either the original audio or the interpreter). No details about translating messages/text.

Security and transparency

Zoom did have some issues with security in the past e.g. hackers in meetings/ spoof messages/ hijack shared screens. Also, the issue of “zoombombing” such as uninvited guests joining a public call and screen-sharing disturbing imagery. Can disable file transfer to prevent malware being shared.

Councils using this platform

The UK Cabinet has held meetings via Zoom – with the Prime Minister tweeting an image of the virtual Cabinet meeting.

Suitable for council meetings

Council would have to do a few tests before making a meeting public. However, the issue is with a public meeting, anyone could spam the comments. Suitable for internal council meetings for all ages as the set-up is quite simple for those less tech-confident.

Things to consider

If you choose to use Zoom we have been advised that we should check our security settings. The site operates from the USA and our data will be held on servers outside of the EU; any legal dispute on breaches of data would be held in California under US law or the council could be held liable. We would have to amend our Privacy Policy. Please view on the following link <https://zoom.us/gdpr>

Microsoft Teams complies with EU GDPR Regulations under the Microsoft brand.

If it is unclear which software to use we can agree to trial any agreed option for a couple of weeks with mock meetings to make sure the software is suitable for us as a council.