



King George's
Field Charity

Ferndown Town Council Scheme of Delegation – COVID 19

Author: Louise Harrison, Town Clerk, Ferndown Town Council, amended 22 April 2021.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Ferndown Town Council (Council) delegated authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman/Town Mayor and/or Vice Chairman/Deputy Mayor or in either of their absences the Chairman of Finance and General-Purpose Committee in the first instance or failing this another Committee Chairman, to take any actions necessary with associated expenditure to: protect the interests of the community

Council business continuity during the period of the pandemic is in line with Government and Public Health England guidelines in response to Government requirements and/or other appropriate authorities to make decisions on behalf of the Council where such decision cannot reasonably be deferred and must be made in order to comply with a commercial or statutory deadline.

This delegation does not extend to matters expressly reserved to the Council in legislation or in its Standing Orders or Financial Regulations. Any decisions made under this delegation must be recorded in writing and must be published in accordance with the relevant regulations.

All Councillors were copied into such delegated requests and if exercised reported to Councillors via the Town Clerks electronic "Weekly Update" email.

If the Town Clerk was unavailable, the delegated authority would fall to the Committee Administrator or Finance Officer, in that order of precedence.

The delegated authority ceased upon the first physical meeting of the Council after the Council meeting at which the delegation was put in place.

Following the end of the COVID regulations on 6 May 2021 that allow local authorities to hold meetings remotely face-to-face meetings will need to resume from 07 May, within Government COVID Guidelines. The Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO), Lawyers in Local Government (LLG) and Hertfordshire County Council have lodged a legal challenge in the High Court that seeks a continuation of local authority remote meetings beyond the 06 May 2021. The date for this challenge to be heard in the courts is not known, and the outcome not guaranteed and so FGPC Committee have considered how it wishes to move forward.



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From 7 May 2021 FGPC have resolved a Temporary Scheme of Delegation to the Town Clerk:

- Backed up by the meetings timetable, Full Council and committee meetings would go ahead virtually and instead of making decisions, would recommend decisions to the Town Clerk, who would then enact those recommendations under the temporary delegation.
- This scheme will remain in place until Councillors decided that a return to face-to-face meetings is safe, or that the delegation should cease for any other reason.
- three items cannot be delegated to the Clerk –
 - (i) the election of Chairman/Town Mayor;
 - (ii) the election of Vice-Chair/Deputy Town Mayor, and
 - (iii) the physical signing off of the AGAR (which has to be done by 30 June).
- A single physical meeting with a pre-agreed quorate in attendance indoor (BC theatre) or outdoor (KGV) meeting will need to take place to address points (i), (ii) and (iii).