

**The 'Coronavirus' Regulations – Temporary changes to Procedural Rules for  
the Staffordshire Police, Fire and Crime Panel**

**(effective 4 April 2020 to 7 May 2021)**

**1. *Definition of 'Meeting' and 'Place of Meeting'***

Reference to meetings of the Panel shall not be limited to a meeting of persons in the same place;

Any reference to a place where a meeting is held, or to be held, includes reference to more than one place including electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers

**2. *Definition of Member attendance at a meeting***

A member shall be deemed to be in attendance at a remote meeting, and forming part of the Quorum, of the Panel at any time when the following conditions are satisfied:

- the member is able to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, the other members in attendance,
- the member is able to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, any members of the public entitled to attend the meeting in order to exercise a right to speak at the meeting, and
- the member is able to be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by any other members of the public attending the meeting.

A Member in remote attendance will be deemed to have left the meeting where, at any point in time during the meeting, any of the above three conditions for remote attendance are not met. In such circumstance the Chair may, as they deem appropriate;

(i) adjourn the meeting for a short period to permit the three conditions for remote attendance of a Member to be re-established; or, if that is not practically possible,

(ii) count the number of members in attendance to confirm the presence of a Quorum and, if so, continue to transact the remaining business of the meeting in the absence of the Member in remote attendance.

NB:

- (i) The references to a member, or a member of the public, attending a meeting includes that person attending by remote access.
- (ii) The description 'member of the public' shall apply to invited participants in the meeting, including the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and/or members of his staff

### **3. Member/Co-opted member declaring an interest- required to leave the meeting**

Where a Member or co-opted member is required to leave the meeting, the means of remote attendance and access is to be severed whilst any discussion or vote takes place in respect of the item or items of business in which the member or co-opted member may not participate.

### **4. Definition of Access to Meetings and Documents**

Panel meetings which are 'open to the public' includes access through remote means including (but not limited to) video conferencing, live webcast, and live interactive streaming and where a meeting is accessible to the public through such remote means the meeting is open to the public whether or not members of the public are able to attend the meeting in person;

The publication, posting or making available of details of meetings and/or a document at the Host Authority's offices includes publication on the Host Authority's website.

If the Chair is made aware that the meeting is not accessible to the public through remote means, due to any technological or other failure of provision, then the Chair shall adjourn the meeting immediately. If the provision of access through remote means cannot be restored within a reasonable period, then the remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chair. If he or she does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the Panel's next meeting.

### **5. Provisions in relation to Voting**

The Coronavirus Regulations do not prescribe arrangements for voting, it merely provides for Panels to determine any temporary changes which they consider appropriate.

In view of the relatively small number of members on the Panel (12) and the limited circumstances under which a formal vote is taken/required (ie when considering the Precept and at Confirmation Hearings) it is recommended that the current provisions:

*'Voting will, in the first instance be determined by voice 'yes' or 'no', but the Chairman may and, if the decision is challenged must, take a show of hands'.*

be amended to read that 'a show of hands' be replaced with 'a named vote'