

CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND UPDATES

COMMITTEE:	Emergency Council Meeting		
MEETING DATE AND TIME	6 th January 2022 6.00pm	LOCATION	Congleton Town Hall
REPORT FROM	Chief Officer – David McGifford		
Agenda item Report Title	5 Delegation of Decision Making for Council and Committees		
Background	<p>The Covid variant, Omicron, is highly contagious whilst appearing to be less dangerous than previous variants. The NHS is experiencing a rapid rise in cases and hospitalisations albeit many of those hospitalised have not had the suggested two vaccinations and a booster jab.</p> <p>However, whilst the Government has not made the decision to legalise remote meetings as they had done previously, they have advised people to work from home “where they can” and wear masks as directed in an attempt to protect the NHS and essential workers.</p> <p>From both a councillor and staffing perspective we have many that have vulnerable relatives who still need to be protected, as well as protecting the council as a body and being able to make decisions legally, both staff and councillors are essential to enable these decisions to be made.</p> <p>Due to the increasing concerns, I have been investigating if we can physically protect ourselves as well as continuing to make legal decisions by operating remotely as we have previously done.</p> <p>I have received guidance from Jackie Weaver on how this could be achieved which will allow us to revert to remote meetings without the relative legislation being brought forward.</p> <p><i>“The council would need to meet to give delegated powers to an approved person i.e. the Clerk/CO to respond on behalf of the council having taken ‘soundings’ from members”</i></p> <p>To get to this point, we need to agree as a Council to this delegation which would be incorporated within our Standing Orders, this would need to be agreed at a meeting of the Council with the minimum of 7 councillors in attendance</p>		
Process	<p>The Council and Committee agendas will clearly show that the meeting is operating under delegated powers with Councillors providing their thoughts and observations on the contents of the agenda. It will then be for the appointed individual with delegated authority to record the minutes based upon those thoughts and observations.</p>		
Proposal	<p>Addition of standing order 95 – Emergency measures for remote or hybrid meetings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In the absence of Government legislation that would facilitate councils being able to host remote or hybrid meetings, the Chief Officer or (in his or her absence) the Deputy Chief Officer will have the delegated authority to make decisions related to items on both Council and Committee agendas based upon thoughts and observations made by Councillors during remote or hybrid meetings.2. Any delegated decision needs to be aligned to Council Policy or Budget.		