

COTHERSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

2020 Annual Parish Meeting arrangements

Author Clerk
Meeting date 11 March 2020

1. Background

The procedural requirements for an assembly of a parish meeting are set out under Part III of Schedule 12 to the Local Government Act 1972 and the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

A parish meeting consists of the local government electors of a parish and the purpose of the meeting is to discuss parish affairs. Although there is no statutory definition or definitive case law to determine what constitutes a 'parish affair', it is generally taken to include an issue, activity or subject which specifically affects a particular parish and which the parish meeting may wish to discuss, debate and potentially influence.

An assembly of a parish meeting is an effective forum for the local government electors to discuss matters, even if there is a separate parish council. The attendance of members of the council may demonstrate that the council is receptive to hearing the views of local residents.

It is normal for the Chairman of the Parish Council to convene an assembly of the parish meeting (though there are other ways). Public notice, signed by the person convening it, must be given at least 7 clear days beforehand, specifying the time and place and the business to be transacted.

When and where — The parish meeting must assemble between 1 March and 1 June (inclusive) each year. It must not commence earlier than 6pm and may not be held in premises which are used for the supply of alcohol unless no other room is available free or at a reasonable cost.

The Chairman of the Parish Council, if present, must preside and if he is absent, the vice-chairman (if any), if present, must preside. If neither the Chairman or vice-chairman are present, the meeting must appoint a chair.

Public and press — The parish meeting must be open to the public, including the press. The press are entitled to copies of the agenda and supporting papers and must be given reasonable facilities for reporting at the meeting.

Voting - Only local government electors for the parish may vote at an assembly of the parish meeting. In the case of an equality of votes, the person presiding shall have a casting vote, in addition to any other vote he may have. A poll may be demanded before the conclusion of an assembly on any question arising at the assembly, but no poll shall be taken unless either (i) the person presiding at the meeting consents or (ii) the poll is demanded by not less than then, or one-third of the local government electors present at the meeting, whichever is less. A poll subsequent to an assembly of a parish meeting shall be a poll of those entitled to attend the meeting as electors and shall be taken by ballot in accordance with the Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1987 as amended.

Resolutions — a parish meeting's resolutions will not be binding on the parish council except in exceptional circumstances (eg a resolution for a parish council to provide allotment gardens). The resolutions provide an indication of the views of the electors who attended the assembly at which the resolutions were made. It is good practice (but not a requirement) for a parish council to consider them formally because it may, subject to having the relevant statutory powers, wish to take action in respect of such resolutions.

Recommendation

The Parish Council should consider setting the date, format and other arrangements for the 2020 Cotherstone Annual Parish Meeting.