

BOLTON by BOWLAND, GISBURN FOREST & SAWLEY

PARISH COUNCIL – EMERGENCY POWERS doc ref TSB EM 26.03.2020

It is agreed that from 6.00pm on Thursday 26th March 2020, Bolton by Bowland, Gisburn Forest & Sawley Parish Council will, until further notice:

- I. Empower Chairman (Cllr. Fortune) & Vice Chairman (Cllr. Foster) to remain in post for the duration of these Emergency Powers
- II. Suspend all Parish Council meetings, including the Annual Parish Council Meeting and amend the Parish Council's standing orders by including these Emergency Powers as a codicil to the existing standing orders and financial regulations, following approval by a majority of Parish Councillors
- III. Delegate all powers and decision making of the council to the Parish Clerk/ RFO *(except those that are prohibited by legislation)* who shall consult with and seek approval by majority from an Emergency Committee of **Hayden Fortune – Chairman, Arnold Foster – Vice Chairman and Cllrs. Elizabeth Twist & Keith Whitwell, being the bank signatories.** In the event that either the Chairman or Vice Chairman is unavailable, then a further parish councillor shall be required to consider the action/decision in lieu.

This delegation of powers shall remain in force until such time as the Government announces a relaxation in the Social Distancing Advice to enable regular Parish Council Meetings to resume without risk to the health and wellbeing of:

- members of the public
- parish councillors
- the Parish Clerk
- the press
- any of whom may/will be in attendance.

For clarity, these emergency powers can be lifted at any time should the national emergency be downgraded and can be extended by the Parish Clerk in consultation with and with the agreement of the majority of the parish councillors if the situation is still prevalent. However, in any event, these powers must be reviewed after 90 days and can only be further extended by a resolution supported by a majority of parish councillors. Each voting member shall register his/her vote (for or against) with the clerk by email.

The Parish Clerk should be instructed to work from home and communicate using e-mail or telephone. Cheque signing should comply with existing authorities, but not be done "face to face".

The Parish Lengthsman will be requested to carry out his normal activities, socially isolating as appropriate. If his personal situation changes, he is to inform Parish Clerk, who will update all Parish Councillors. Parish Lengthsman will submit his jobsheet and invoice by email. The Emergency Committee may query any item, but Clerk / RFO has the delegated powers to ensure regular payment is made.

The Emergency Committee should consider establishing a system of virtual conferencing for link ups.

The Parish Council shall freeze all grant funding and unessential spending unless approved by the majority of councillors using email. This will not apply to spending related to property owned by the council, wages or where expenditure is contractual or essential to the running of the council.

Communication with the press and public shall be the responsibility of the Clerk after due consultation with the Chairman, or in his absence, the Vice Chairman.

Proposed by Parish Councillor Hayden Fortune, Chairman

Seconded by Parish Councillor Roger Park

Dated: 26th March 2020