

# EDGCOTT PARISH COUNCIL

## Rapid Response Policy 17



Adopted: 21 April 2021

Reviewed: May 2025

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## 1 PURPOSE

Council established that there would be a potential risk to continuity of Council business in the event of a sudden and unexpected loss of availability of a key member or employee such that access to mission critical paper or electronic documentation, the web site, emails, minutes etc under their control is denied or becomes impossible.

Council has resolved, therefore, to ensure Council business continuity is never put at risk due to the unavailability of key personnel, Council documentation, records, web site, or electronic data recovery by ensuring access to such items is never under the sole control of any one individual.

However, this potentially becomes problematic in the event of an emergency requiring urgent resolution, either by immediate action and/or financial expenditure.

This Policy provides the framework for how Council will effectively manage its resolution and conduct its administrative arrangements in relation to the requirements of the relevant legislation such as to ensure the timely and efficient compliance with its obligations and to deliver its duties in regard to the expectations of the residents of the Parish such as to address the need for urgent action in the event of an emergency without giving any one individual responsibility for the unilateral disposition of public money.

Council has made every effort to ensure all relevant statutory requirements to which a council is subject are encompassed in this Policy but confirm that, in any event, those requirements apply whether or not they are incorporated herein.

This Policy has been drawn up within the context of the Parish Council's Freedom of Information Policy and its Data Protection Policy and every effort has been made to ensure this Policy is consistent with other Council Policies where relevant.

### NOTES:

- Where the word "councillor" is used, unless the context suggests otherwise, the meaning is intended to include non-councillors, with or without voting rights, and council employees.
- A 'co-opted member' is a person who is not an elected member of the Council but who has been co-opted onto the Council, or a committee or sub-committee properly constituted by Council, by a majority of elected Councillors at a properly constituted meeting of Council and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of Council or that committee or sub-committee.
- A 'meeting' is a properly constituted meeting of the Council, any of its committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees.
- Unless otherwise expressed, a reference to a Member of the Council includes a co-opted member of the Council.
- Where gender specific wording is used, meaning is intended to be gender neutral.

## 2 SCOPE

Council recognises that the efficient management of its business is critical in complying with its legal and regulatory obligations and to contribute to the effective overall management of the Parish Council and this Policy lays out how all Councillors and council employees are expected to abide by these requirements in all emergency situations.

### **3        PROTOCOL**

1. In the event of an urgent action or payment requirement arising, the first responder (Clerk, RFO or a Councillor) will text all other Councillors and the Clerk using an approved, agreed mobile phone number network;
2. The text will be designated as requiring an immediate response. It may suggest a course of remedial action and request an opinion as to the suitability of the suggestion.
3. On receipt of the text all recipients will respond as immediately as possible by reply to the full rapid response network but, in any event, to include the Clerk (or in his absence, The Chair), who will act as the co-ordinating point, each reply will deliver a short acceptance or rejection of the resolution offered or offer an alternative.
4. The Clerk (or Chair) will consolidate replies until there is a majority of, or at least two, Councillors in agreement with any proposed action.
5. On gaining the required agreements, the Clerk and Chair will become authorised to initiate the agreed emergency action in the knowledge any action or expenditure is compliant with the requirement for multiple agreements.
6. The Clerk will hold all emails in a separate folder for verification after the event.
7. The Clerk will follow up the decision and identify any action and expenditure arising back to the full circulation.
8. The Clerk will add the actions taken, and the reason why this Protocol was initiated, as an item on the Agenda for the next full meeting of Council and submit details for formal ratification by full Council.