

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
VARIATION OF SCHEME OF EXECUTIVE DELEGATION**

To: Chief Executive – Liz Watts
From: Leader of the Council – Bridget Smith

Signed: Cllr Bridget Z D Smith **Dated:** 30 March 2020

In accordance with the Council’s Constitution, Part 3, Responsibility for Executive Functions I am writing to inform you of the change I wish to make to refine the allocation of functions and responsibilities as set out in Table 2B within the Constitution. The change to take immediate effect upon subsequent written notification to all Members is detailed below.

Delegated authority to be given to: Chief Executive

Delegation:

As far as the law allows and until specified otherwise, to authorise the Chief Executive (or any other Chief Officer or Head of Service in their absence) to exercise all executive functions, or to authorise specified officers to exercise such functions, where it is necessary for any such function to be discharged and it is impracticable or impossible for the matter to be considered by the Cabinet (or by a relevant Lead Cabinet Member to whom the decision making functions have been delegated), in consultation, so far as practicable, with the Leader and relevant Lead Cabinet Member.

Reasons for Delegation	
1.	In the light of the impact of Covid-19 on the Council’s usual decision making procedures, to confirm delegation arrangements to enable executive decision making to continue where it is impracticable or impossible for the matter to be considered by the Cabinet or relevant Lead Cabinet Member.
2.	In normal circumstances we would make executive decisions through Cabinet members individually. The law currently requires these meetings to be held in person, which is not practically possible with the government’s ‘social distancing’ policy. Even if the law changes to allow virtual meetings, we are likely to struggle to reach a quorum if a number of members are ill at the same time. The delegation above will confirm our ability to continue to take executive decisions in these extraordinary circumstances. The current quorum for Cabinet also requires either the Leader or Deputy Leader (Statutory) to be present.
Background	
3.	Local authorities are currently facing unprecedented governance issues arising from the Covid-19 emergency. The Government has recently required the majority of the population to stay at home and requires anyone in a high risk group to self-isolate for 12 weeks.

4.	Emergency legislation will allow us to hold virtual meetings, but while these are being established technically, and in the event that a quorum is not possible in a virtual meeting (due to illness), the Council still needs to continue its operations, including its emergency response.
5.	In normal circumstances we would make these decisions through Cabinet collectively or Cabinet members individually. Whilst the Chief Executive already has emergency powers in the Scheme of Delegation, the further delegations proposed will reinforce her ability to operate in these extraordinary circumstances and will reinforce her authority to execute such powers in respect of executive functions as she already holds. They are not intended to remove democratic accountability or transparency, and wherever possible decisions will be made in line with the Council's usual procedures.
6.	Proposed temporary arrangements for decision making during the period of the emergency are outlined in the delegation above. This matter will be kept under review.
7.	The Leader has authority to refine the allocation of functions and responsibilities as she wishes. To effect changes, the Leader is required to provide details of the changes in writing to the Chief Executive and such changes have effect immediately upon subsequent notification to all Members.