

Guidance on Hybrid Meetings

A. Method for conducting hybrid meetings

1. Both those attending physically or joining remotely will be captured in the Teams call and on the live broadcast of the meeting.
2. The Teams call will utilise both the audio and video functionality so all remote participants should be capable of being heard and seen by those physically present at the meeting place and by other remote participants, and vice versa.
3. It will not impact the lawfulness or otherwise of the meeting should a remote participant lose their connection or not be able to see the other participants for any part of the meeting, nor if they cannot be seen by other participants and / or the public. All participants will, as far as able, try to join the meeting using the Teams app or web browser and not via dialling into the meeting.
4. Unless a meeting is dealing with confidential items, it will be streamed to the public so that they may listen and watch.
5. The committee officer will be physically present at the meeting place. Other officers will in most cases participate remotely.
6. Meetings will be streamed live as well as recorded, stored and uploaded to the Council's website. The Council will aim to do this within 48 hours of the meeting finishing.
7. Minutes will be taken and published in the usual manner.

B. Prior to the meeting

1. Agendas will be published on the [website](#) and via the modern.gov app, and a public deposit copy will be available at the Crowndale Centre reception. Hard copies can be made available on request. Members will receive an automated email when the agenda is published online containing a link to the agenda.

C. At the meeting

1. The committee officer will begin the Teams call 15 minutes before the meeting start time to allow remote participants to join promptly and check their audio / video feeds are working.
2. The usual rules as to numbers of members to create a quorum will apply, which includes physical and remote attendance for Schools Forum.
3. The meeting will, as the first item of business on the agenda, note and agree the variations / interpretations of procedure rules as set out in this document. The meeting will then follow the published agenda as normal and be conducted in accordance with the procedure rules set out in the Constitution as supplemented by this document.

Debate

4. Members present in the meeting place will indicate their desire to speak in the customary way by raising their hand. Any Member joining remotely will indicate a wish to speak by submitting their name using the “raise hand” or “chat” function on Teams, and their participation will be at the discretion of the Chair. The “chat” will not be minuted nor be a formal part or contribution to the meeting. All participants should refrain from using the chat for any function other than indicating their wish to speak or indicating a loss of their audio feed and will be reminded about this at the outset of the meeting.
5. When not speaking, participants will be asked to keep themselves muted. Officers may do this remotely to improve the audio quality of the meeting.

Interruptions to connections

6. If the audio feed of a Member joining the meeting remotely cuts out during the meeting, they will: if still connected to Teams, use the ‘chat’ function to advise immediately that they can no longer hear the other participants;
7. If they are unable to use the Teams ‘chat’ function, use the contact details of the committee clerk as detailed on the agenda who will advise the Chair.
8. Ordinarily the failure of the audio connection of a party joining the meeting remotely will not impact on the conduct of the meeting.

Behaviour

9. The Chair will at their discretion be entitled to ask the committee officer to mute any remote contributors should they consider it appropriate. Should a remote participant become disruptive, the Chair will warn them and should that warning not result in a change of behaviour which is acceptable to the Chair then they shall, at their absolute discretion, be entitled to ask the committee officer to terminate the individual’s participation in the meeting.

D. Confidential/Exempt Items

1. Should the meeting have confidential or exempt items on the agenda, the Chair will move the usual motion to move into private session.
2. The meeting shall then stand adjourned until the Chair is satisfied upon the advisement of the committee officer that the public live feed has paused and all remote participants not eligible to remain in this part of the meeting have been removed from the Teams call.
3. When resolving to move back into public session, the meeting shall again adjourn until the Chair is satisfied, upon the advisement of the committee officer, that the public live feed has resumed and all eligible remote participants have had their audio / video feeds restored satisfactorily.

E. Equalities

1. It is recognised that that some persons who ordinarily would be able to participate in Council meetings in person will not be able to participate in remote meetings due to physical or other disability or because they lack the technological capability to do so, and others may not wish to participate remotely. To this end, the press and public will be physically admitted up to a safe limit at which social distancing can be maintained.
2. Where there is the functionality to dial into a meeting instead of joining via the Internet, the Council will support this as far as possible in line with the procedures set out above.
3. Teams has live captions functionality for remote meetings for the deaf / hard of hearing, which users can independently turn on; guidance on how to do so will be provided. The Council cannot accept any liability for the accuracy of these live captions.
4. The Council will consider any other requests for reasonable adjustments to be made in order to allow parties to be involved in remote Council meetings as far as circumstances at the time of the meeting allows.
5. In addition the Council will review and monitor the operation of its hybrid decision making and make adjustments when it considers it can further mitigate any adverse impact.

ENDS