

*SUPPLEMENTARY PROCEDURE RULES FOR THE REGULATION OF
PROCEEDINGS AT REMOTE MEETINGS*

COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 30

REMOTE MEETINGS

Background

- 30.1 The [Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels \(Coronavirus\) \(Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings\) \(England and Wales\) Regulations 2020](#) make provision for remote attendance at, and remote access to, Council meetings held on or before 7 May 2021.
- 30.2 The regulations enable the Council to hold meetings without all, or any, of the members being physically present in a room. This allows for remote meetings through electronic, digital, virtual locations, live webcast, live interactive streaming, video and telephone conferencing.
- 30.3 The 'place' at which the meeting is held may be a Council building, or where the organiser of the meeting is located, or an electronic, digital or virtual location, a web address, or a conference call telephone number.
- 30.4 In order for Members to be able to attend meetings of the Council remotely, they need not be physically present, provided they are able to hear and be heard (and, where possible, see and be seen by) other Councillors and members of the public attending remotely or in person.
- 30.5 The Procedure Rules in this Constitution apply to remote meetings in the same way as they do for other meetings of the Council except where they conflict, in which case this Procedure Rule takes precedence over other Procedure Rules in relation to the governance of remote meetings.

Process

- 30.6 The Council facilitates remote attendance and access to its meetings through the medium of Zoom, which enables the following to take place:
- (a) Contributions to be received from people using a wide variety of devices, not all of whom are on the council network.
 - (b) Being accessible to both participants and members of the public who are not taking an active role but just observing.
 - (c) Presentations and documents (maps, plans, etc) to be displayed and spoken to.
- 30.7 Before the meeting, all participants should be aware of the following etiquette:
- (a) Join the meeting promptly to avoid unnecessary interruptions.
 - (b) Mute microphones when not talking.
 - (c) Indicate a wish to speak by using the 'raise your hand' function.

- (d) Only speak when invited to by the Chairman.
- (e) Anyone speaking should state their name before making a comment.
- (f) If referring to a specific page or slide, mention the page or slide number.

30.8 The Chairman and the Meeting Controller may:

- (a) Pause (adjourn) the meeting by taking down the stream (live feed) from public viewing and then resume it when needed.
- (b) Switch on each active participant's microphone when they are invited to speak and switch them off afterwards.
- (c) Mute someone speaking at any time.
- (d) Mute everyone speaking except themselves at any time.
- (e) Switch some active participants and observers off or move them to the 'waiting room', so they are paused and have neither 'live' visual or audio feed whilst the committee deliberates in private or an officer present gives the Committee advice. By taking down the live feed content from the public and just displaying a holding slide, decision makers may hold a separate meeting on Zoom. The live stream can then be resumed when needed.

Questions by members of the public

30.9 The Procedure for Public Question Time at Council and Committee meetings contained within Council Procedure Rule 8 will continue to be followed for remote meetings, with the amendment of Procedure Rule 8.1.3 to require questions/statements from the public to be provided in writing to the Clerk for the meeting via E-mail at least 48 hours before the commencement of the meeting. Questions will be taken in the order that they are received by the Clerk and any not answered at the end of the 15 Minutes allotted for Public Question Time will receive a written reply. A Public Question Time Leaflet for Remote Meetings is available on the Council's website and from Democratic Services.

Public Speaking at Planning and Licensing Committees/Sub-Committees

30.10 Public speaking at Planning and Licensing Committees/Sub-Committees will be in accordance with their Public Speaking Schemes, as modified for remote meetings.

Petitions

30.11 Petitions will continue to be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme.

Record of Attendance

30.12 At the commencement of a remote meeting, the Clerk will perform a roll-call, to record the Members of the Council/Committee/Sub-Committee present at the meeting and any substitutions made in accordance with Procedure Rule 24.2.

Voting

- 30.13 If an item does not appear to be contentious, the Chairman will ask if Members agree to the recommendation(s)/motion and whether any Member disagrees or wishes to abstain. If nobody objects, the recommendation(s)/motion will be taken to be carried. Otherwise, named voting will be used to record votes at remote meetings.
- 30.14 To record a vote, the Clerk will call the name of all members of the Council/Committee/Sub-Committee present in alphabetical order and ask them to state their voting intention (For, Against or Abstain). These will then be counted and recorded. At the conclusion of the voting, the Chairman or Clerk shall announce the numbers of votes cast for, against and abstentions and announce whether the motion has been carried or lost.

Access to information

- 30.15 The requirement to ensure meetings are open to the public includes access by remote means, including video conferencing, live webcast and live interactive streaming. Where a meeting is accessible to the public through such remote means, the meeting is open to the public whether or not members of the public are able to attend the meeting in person.
- 30.16 Any requirements for the authority to ensure publication, posting or making available a document for inspection at offices of the council include publication on the council's website.

Dealing with technical difficulties

- 30.17 In the event that the Chairman or the Meeting Controller hosting the meeting identifies a failure of the remote participation facility, an adjournment will be declared while the fault is addressed.
- 30.18 If it is not possible to address the fault and the meeting is inquorate, the meeting will be abandoned until such time as it can be reconvened. If the meeting is quorate, the Chairman will decide if the meeting should continue, depending on the difficulties being experienced, or whether it should be adjourned until a later time or date.