



Virtual Meeting Policy

Policy 51

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1.0 Introduction

Cuckfield Parish Council recognises the opportunities offered by allowing access to Council meetings via a virtual connection as well as by attending a physical meeting and so has developed this policy to assist Councillors and members of the public and press to understand options for participation, and what to expect.

2.0 Agenda and Supporting Documents

Councillors are summonsed as per regulations with the agenda and documents being placed on the Council's website. Agendas are also posted on local noticeboards.

3.0 Virtual Meeting Platform

Cuckfield Parish Council will use Zoom to provide video communications. Zoom enables video and audio conferencing for persons using mobile devices, desktops, and fixed room systems.

In preparation for the meeting the Clerk will publish via the agenda:

- The Zoom meeting link
- Meeting ID
- Meeting passcode

4.0 Standing Orders

Standing Orders will be used to guide the meeting in a similar way as if persons were present in a place, and the Councillors Code of Conduct still applies.

5.0 Specific Virtual Meeting Arrangements

a. Opening the Meeting

The Clerk of the meeting will open the meeting and share control with the Chairman of the meeting.

All those joining the zoom meeting will be immediately placed into the waiting room from where they will be admitted to the open meeting shortly before it starts.

b. Discussions

During the meeting all persons joining the meeting remotely other than Council members will be muted. During the public participation period members of the public will be required to 'enable video' in order for them to be visible to the Chairman and will raise their hand to indicate that they wish to speak. Their microphone will then be unmuted and they can address the meeting. Following the conclusion of their address the microphone will be muted.

All Council members attending the meeting remotely will monitor their own background noise and mute their own microphones, except when speaking, to reduce interference with the meeting.

All meeting documents will be shared by the Host for all attendees to review.

c. Voting

All voting will be undertaken by a show of hands.

d. Poor Connectivity

In the case of poor connectivity the Chairman will decide whether to continue with the hybrid meeting or to close the remote access.

e. Telephone Attendance

Persons wishing to attend by telephone are advised to contact the Clerk in advance in order that processes can be put in place to enable appropriate engagement.

6.0 Hybrid Meeting Etiquette

Normal Standing Orders apply regarding conduct at meetings.

Any participants who behave inappropriately will be muted by the Host and can be placed in the waiting room if necessary, or even removed from the call should that be appropriate.

7.0 Public Participation

The Clerk will read any pre-submitted addresses from the press and public.

8.0 Confidential Matters

Any Confidential matters on the agenda will be dealt with in a closed session. Any members of the public or press who are present at the hybrid meeting will be asked to leave, and the virtual meeting will be closed.

9.0 Recording

Hybrid meetings will not be recorded.

10.0 Information

The chat view box on the Zoom meeting will be disabled.