



Remotely Attended Meetings

Protocol (v3)

May 2020

Note: This protocol is likely to be updated and amended as experience helps us to develop our knowledge of running effective remote meetings.

Introduction

1. On 4th April 2020 the government introduced The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority meetings) (England) Regulations 2020 to allow local councils to meet remotely. This protocol sets out how Cullompton Town Council will manage remotely attended meetings during the pandemic.
2. You do not need to subscribe to Zoom in order to participate in the meeting, just follow the advertised link. Ensure you note the meeting id and password. The information will be posted on the Town Council's website and noticeboard as soon as it is available along with the agenda for the meeting.
3. It will work best if you can join the remote meeting via a computer or laptop with a camera as it will enable you to make use of the features more easily. It is also possible to use a tablet or smartphone or it is possible to participate by audio only via a landline phone.
4. This protocol should be used in conjunction with Cullompton Town Council's Standing Orders in particular 2c, 3i(i), 3i(ii), 3s, 3y and 3z which refer specifically to remotely attended meetings.

Planning and Preparation and General Information

5. The notice of the meeting will be advertised in the normal manner i.e. on the public noticeboard and the Town Council website and an agenda will be issued within the normal time frames. The notice of the meeting will include the link to the meeting.
6. Minutes will be taken at the meetings in the normal manner. Minutes will be confirmed at the next appropriate meeting (as usual) but signed when the Mayor / committee chair is able to attend the town council offices.
7. Apologies need to be given in the normal manner.
8. Public Participation. Members of the public are encouraged to email their question / statement to the Town Council (enquiries@cullomptontowncouncil.gov.uk) at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.
9. The normal required standards of behaviour and discussion must be applied in the same manner of a face to face meeting.
10. Please be patient with those who are less experienced in this type of remote meeting.
11. Please respect confidentiality and do not breach the code of conduct. Do not make enquiries about private matter, health, home etc.
12. Before entering the meeting please ensure that you are in a private place where there is little background interference/noise/people.
13. If you have a camera / video facility please use it as it helps you to feel engaged with the meeting.
14. If using the camera or video facility be aware of the background behind you and make sure it is as professional as possible. Remember, meeting participants will

be able to see what is behind and around you so be especially careful about items such as photos and pictures.

15. If a councillor has an interest in a matter and would normally leave a physical meeting, then they should state that interest as usual and at the relevant agenda item the Chair will remove them from the meeting and put the councillor with the interest into the waiting room; when discussion and voting on the agenda item is complete the Chair will re-admit the Councillor to the meeting.
16. There might be technical issues during the meeting so please be patient.
17. It is suggested you log in and request to join the meeting about 10 minutes before the meeting start time
18. The Chair / Town Clerk / meeting administrator might have to ask for clarification, for dialogue to be repeated in order to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to be heard.

Meeting Process

19. On entering the meeting you will be placed in a “waiting room” whilst your attendance is verified and until the meeting is close to starting.
20. When entering the meeting the software should prompt you to test your audio – please do this to ensure you can hear and be heard.
21. The host will allow access and you will join with your microphone muted.
22. A check will be done to establish that you can be heard at the start of the meeting by means of a roll call.
23. The meeting will be chaired in the normal manner.
24. All participants other than the Chairman will be muted. If the Chairman invites someone to speak they will be unmuted.
25. A Councillor wishing to speak should clearly raise their hand so it can be seen on camera or press the “raise a hand” function in Zoom.
26. When you speak please state your name each time you speak for the benefit of those who might not be able to see you.
27. Please do not interrupt others – remember there is often a delay between a person speaking and other participants hearing them
28. Standing Orders regarding the length of time a Councillor may speak (3 minutes) and the number of times they may speak on a subject (once) will be enforced (See Standing Order 1).
29. Voting (see Standing Order 3s (ii)) Votes will be taken using the following procedure:
 - The Meeting Chair will state the proposal to be voted upon, including the names of the proposer and seconder.
 - The Chair / Town Clerk or Meeting Administrator will read out the name of each Councillor one by one and the Councillor should state if they are voting for, against or abstaining. The order of names will be proposer, seconder, councillors attending - in alphabetical order, Chair of meeting.
 - Each vote will be noted and the totals for each option read out to the meeting.
 - The Meeting Chair will declare the outcome of the vote.

30. In the event of a person causing persistent disruption the Chair may use the technology available to exclude the disruptive person from the meeting (see Standing Order 2c).
31. Where a resolution has been made to exclude the press and public the Chair will wait until all relevant persons have left the meeting before continuing the meeting; if the persons do not leave the Chair may use the technology available to remove the person(s) from the meeting.

Public Participation

32. The agendas for Council and Committee meetings will have an item for public participation.
33. The total amount of time for the Public Participation agenda item will be 15 minutes and each speaker will be limited to a maximum time of 3 minutes (as stated in Standing Orders).
34. Any member of the public wishing to speak at a meeting is asked to contact the Town Council Offices at least 48 hours before the meeting starts to say that they will be attending the meeting and provide an overview of what they wish to speak about
35. Members of the public are encouraged to complete a public participation form which gives their contact details and brief information about what they are intending to say at the meeting. The form is available from the Town Council Offices and the Town Council's website. Submission of a written question helps with managing the meeting, preparation of a response and minuting the meeting.
36. At the meeting, the chair will encourage members of the public to identify themselves and participate in the public participation session.

Confidential Business

37. Confidential business will be kept to a minimum and the meeting Chair will remove any members of the press and public from the meeting (if they do not leave). Participating Councillors should do their best to ensure that they are on their own and cannot be overheard whilst confidential business is discussed.