



HYBRID MEETINGS PROTOCOL

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1. PURPOSE OF THIS PROTOCOL

This Protocol sets out the recommended procedures for Hybrid Meetings to assist with the smooth running of such meetings. A Glossary of Terms used in this Protocol is included in the Appendix hereto.

2. STANDING ORDERS

This Protocol is intended as guidance for use in relation to Hybrid Meetings and to supplement, not amend nor supersede, the Council's Standing Orders.

3. REMOTE PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL AUTHORITY MEETINGS

- a. Remote participation in Local Authority Meetings is provided for in Section 43 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.
- b. Pre-Agenda Meetings for any Local Authority Meeting shall take place remotely.
- c. Remote participation in Local Authority Meetings can only take place on the direction of the Convener presiding at the meeting, whom failing, the Vice Convener presiding at the meeting.
- d. The Convenor (or Vice Convenor as applicable) shall be asked to confirm, prior to the calling notice for the meeting being issued, whether they wish to make such a direction to allow remote participation in the Local Authority Meeting.
- e. Should such a direction be made, then the provisions of this Protocol shall apply to such a Local Authority Meeting, and it shall be known as a Hybrid Meeting.
- f. Such direction will then be confirmed at the relevant Local Authority Meeting and will be duly minuted.
- g. It would be helpful if any Member wishing to participate remotely in a Hybrid Meeting informs DemocraticServices@angus.gov.uk by email a minimum of 3 days in advance of the Hybrid Meeting to allow sufficient time to organise any requirements.
- h. It is intended that the physical venue of all Hybrid Meetings will be the Council Chamber at Town & County Hall, Forfar albeit this may be subject to change. This may be e.g. for a major planning application where it may be appropriate to change the location of the meeting.

4. CHAIRING MEETINGS

The legislation provides that Local Authority Meetings may be conducted in any way in which each Member is enabled to participate although not present with others. However, it is recommended that the Chair of the Hybrid Meeting shall be physically present at the meeting venue wherever possible in order to ensure the efficient running of the meeting.

5. OFFICER ATTENDANCE

- a. The following Officers will also attend Hybrid Meetings in-person, wherever possible, in order to provide support to the Chair unless all Members are attending the Local Authority Meeting remotely: -
 - The Committee Officer
 - Legal Officer
 - Finance Officer
 - Chief Executive/Depute Chief Executive (as applicable apart from quasi-judicial meetings)

6. JOINING A HYBRID MEETING REMOTELY

- a. All Remote Members must join the Hybrid Meeting via the MS Teams link or via a telephone line on the number provided in the MS Teams invite at least 10 minutes before the Hybrid Meeting is due to start.
- b. All Remote Members must: -
 - ensure that video is selected and switched on.
 - mute audio until invited to speak by the Chair.
 - ensure that their camera is switched on when speaking.
 - activate the blurred background setting in Microsoft Teams or download and use one of the corporate backgrounds. No other backgrounds should be used.
 - be in a quiet, private location.
- c. All Remote Attendees must be aware that the Hybrid Meeting will be webcast live over the internet and must be mindful of their surroundings. If there are other people in the Remote Attendee's location, those other people should be made aware that they may be filmed.
- d. It was agreed at Special Council on 24 March 2022 (Report no 118/22) that meetings will be live streamed and that any recording made will be held for a period of 5 years in total from the date of such meetings, for the first 3 years being available by link on the Council's website and thereafter for 2 years on a historical archive basis, all in compliance with

and subject to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation.

7. QUORUM

Remote Members will be counted for the purposes of determining whether there is a quorum. This means that there will not require to be a quorum of Members physically present at the meeting venue.

8. AT THE MEETING

- a. At the start of the Hybrid Meeting the Chair shall remind all attendees that the meeting is being recorded and webcast live on the Council's YouTube channel.
- b. The Committee Officer present at the Hybrid Meeting shall check attendance of Members. This will confirm whether any Members are joining remotely and will ensure that all In-Person Attendees can see and hear Remote Members.

9. TECHNICAL ISSUES

- a. It is the responsibility of all Remote Members deciding to remotely attend a Local Authority Meeting to ensure that they have a stable and consistent connection to participate fully in the meeting. It is advised that if there are any doubts, the Member should present themselves in person to the meeting at the physical venue.
- b. If a Remote Member loses connection, the Committee Clerk will inform the Hybrid Meeting as soon as practicable after they become aware. Any Member can ask for agreement by other Members to call a short recess to determine if the link can quickly be re-established or an alternative method of access to the Hybrid Meeting can be established. If access to the Hybrid Meeting cannot be established for that Remote Member during the short recess, business will continue and the Remote Member will be deemed to have left the Meeting at the time the connection failed.
- c. Remote Members are asked that, prior to each Hybrid Meeting, they take a note of the specific number dial-in details which are available in the calendar invite. This will allow them the opportunity to continue to participate in the Hybrid Meeting by dialling in by telephone should they lose connection.
- d. Different rules apply in relation to Quasi-Judicial and Regulatory Matters. Please see Paragraph 13 below.

10. VOTING

- a. A Remote Member will cast their vote as if participating in a roll call vote. The Committee Officer will take the vote manually and shall: -
 - advise Remote Members to activate their microphones, vote and then mute again.
 - take the vote by roll call, pausing to allow each Member time to vote.
 - Remote Members will not be given any further opportunity to vote.
- b. A Remote Member may also indicate at any point during the vote that they have re-established their connection and their vote will be made at that point. A Remote Member cannot vote, however, following the conclusion of the vote.

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Any Remote Member who has declared an interest in an item and withdrawn, must leave the Microsoft Teams meeting completely whilst the item is being considered. An instant message via Microsoft Teams will be sent to the Remote Member to advise them when they can re-join the Hybrid Meeting and resume their participation.

12. LEAVING A HYBRID MEETING

If a Remote Member needs to leave a Hybrid Meeting before it has concluded, they should raise their hand in Microsoft Teams and advise the Chair. Any In-Person Member who needs to leave a Hybrid Meeting early should notify the Chair at the start of the meeting, if possible, otherwise indicate to the Chair that they are leaving so that this can be minuted accordingly.

13. QUASI-JUDICIAL AND REGULATORY MATTERS

- a. Remote Member(s) attending Hybrid meetings where Quasi-Judicial and Regulatory Matters are being considered will not be permitted to participate by audio only and must also ensure that they use the video function and have their camera switched on. In determining such applications, all Members must be able to receive and consider the same information.
- b. Any presentations submitted as part of an application must be shared with the Remote Member either via the Microsoft Teams "Share Screen" function or by other arrangements in advance of the meeting.

- c. Any additional papers submitted at the meeting and accepted by the Committee must be provided to the Remote Member by email. Members may agree to adjourn the Hybrid Meeting for a short period to facilitate this and to give time for all Members to consider the new information.
- d. The Chair may confirm with the Remote Members that they are satisfied that they have received the same information as the In-Person Members and feel able to participate in the determination of the application.
- e. No Member shall participate in the taking of a quasi-judicial decision on an item of business unless they have been present during consideration of the whole item otherwise the decision made could be challenged.

14. EXEMPT AND CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

Remote Members must ensure that they are in a secure private location, and that no-one else is able to hear the proceedings from the device being used by that Remote Member, when they participate in the consideration of any Confidential and/or Exempt item of business.

Appendix – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

In this Protocol, unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions shall have the meanings assigned to them: -

“Chair”, “Convener” and “Vice Convener”	means the person duly appointed to preside at a Local Authority Meeting.
“Councillor”	means a councillor elected to Angus Council in terms of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994.
“External Member”	means a person validly appointed to a Committee or Sub-Committee who is not a Councillor.
“Hybrid Meeting(s)”	means a Local Authority Meeting where attendees can be present either in-person at the meeting venue or by joining remotely via Microsoft Teams or telephone.
“In-Person Member”	means any Councillor or External Member attending a Hybrid Meeting physically at the meeting venue.
“Local Authority Meeting”	means a meeting of Full Council, any Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council or the Angus Licensing Board.
“Pre-Agenda Meeting”	means a meeting of relevant Councillors and officers in advance of a Local Authority Meeting where the proposed agenda and draft reports are discussed, prior to finalisation.
“Quasi-Judicial and Regulatory Matters”	means any matters involving the exercise of discretion and procedures of a regulatory nature including but not limited to the determination of licensing and planning applications and School Placing Request Appeals.
“Remote Attendee(s)”	means any attendee of a Hybrid Meeting joining remotely via Microsoft Teams or (for non-quasi-judicial matters) telephone, and includes Remote Members and Remote Officers.
“Remote Member(s)”	means any Councillor or External Member attending a Hybrid Meeting by joining remotely via Microsoft Teams or (for non-quasi-judicial matters) telephone.
“Remote Officer(s)”	means any Angus Council officer attending a Hybrid Meeting by joining remotely via Microsoft Teams or (for non-quasi-judicial matters) telephone.