

Virtual Full Council Meeting Procedure Rules

Conduct of the Meeting

1. **Notice of a Remote Meeting** - The Proper Officer will give notice of the date and time of any remote meeting called under the Council Procedure Rules and shall provide details of how the remote meeting shall be conducted. The Notice, reports and background papers will be placed on the Local Authority website:
<https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/listing/council-meetings>
2. **The Full Council** meeting is a virtual/remote meeting in that it is being conducted at no specific location and all participants are at various locations, communicating via audio and online.
3. **The Regulations** (The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 made under the Coronavirus Act 2020 enable Council/Committee meetings to be held in a virtual format and enables remote attendance.
4. **Remote Attendance - means a person is able at that time:**
 - (a) to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, the other members in attendance,
 - (b) to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, any members of the public entitled to attend the meeting in order to exercise a right to speak at the meeting, and
 - (c) to be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by any other members of the public attending the meeting.
5. **Remote Access** - means by electronic means, including by telephone conference, videoconference, live webcasts, and live interactive streaming.
6. **Types of Remote Link** - Members have been provided with the Zoom Communications software to enable them to attend the remote Full Council meetings. Members should try to establish videoconference capability when they sit as Chair of Council and when they speak. At all other times during the meeting they should turn off their videoconference and audio. If there are issues with capacity only the Chair of Council will remain on videoconference throughout the meeting.
7. **The Conduct** – details provided below are set out in relation to the Full Council meeting under Rule 6 of the Council Constitution being held as a virtual/remote meetings.
8. **The Full Council meeting** will comprise the Members of the Council and Officers required to be in attendance.
9. **Apologies for the meeting** - The apologies for the remote meeting should be given to the Committee Team in the usual manner via the Group Leader, by midday on the day of the meeting.
10. **The Minutes of the Council meeting** – to be approved by Members of the Council on their accuracy only (**Procedure Rule 8** only allows for matters of accuracy to be considered) and to be signed electronically by the Chair of Council and saved in the Committee folder until such time as the Chair can sign them.

- 11. Declaration of Interests** - Any Member participating by remote link who declares an interest in any item of business will be required to leave the remote meeting – this will be confirmed by the Committee Officer that the Member has left the meeting. The Committee Officer will confirm to the Member when they may re-join the remote meeting.
- 12. The Quorum for the Meeting** is 10 Members “in attendance”. Any Member participating by remote attendance shall be regarded as present for the purposes of determining quorum. In the event of any failure of the videoconference/audio (or both) the Chair of Council will immediately determine if the remote meeting is still quorate. If it is, then the business of the remote meeting will continue, if there is no quorum then the remote meeting will adjourn for a period specified by the Chair of Council to allow the connection to be re-established. If the number of Members who lose connection affect the proportionality of the meeting then it must be adjourned until such time as sufficient Members can be reconnected to achieve proportionality. This will be for the Chair to rule on.
- 13. Exclusion of members of the public and press** will be required to leave the remote meeting should items need to be discussed which are exempt from being discussed in public under the access to information procedure rules. Part I of Schedule 12A (Paragraphs 1 to 7). This means that the Part I business will be held before the livestreaming is stopped to allow any Part II confidential business on the agenda to be debated.
- 14. Members of the public** who wish to hear the meeting discussion and view the remote meeting will be able to do so via live stream using the virtual meeting link published on the Full Council’s Summons. Members of the public will not be able to make any comments as this function will be switched off for all remote meetings.
- 15. Livestreaming** - Under the virtual meeting regulations that govern the conduct of meetings held remotely it is a requirement that not only should all members present be able to hear and be heard, where the meeting is in public any member of the public attending remotely should also be able to hear the debate. Therefore in the event that, for any reason, connectivity is lost with the live streaming, the Officer responsible for monitoring the live streaming will immediately notify the Chair of Council who will adjourn the meeting until such time as the live stream has been restored. In the event that it cannot be restored within 10 minutes of the start of the adjournment the Chair of Council will adjourn the meeting to another date and time.
- 16. Late items of business** – if there are any late items of business they will be taken at the appropriate place on the summons after other items in that category. The late items of business being items which had not been available five clear working days before the meeting. The late item(s) of business to be announced at the meeting by the Chair of Council and a reason for the urgency of the item to be announced.
- 17. Visual Presentation** - the usual visual presentation of the Summons provided at the meeting will not be provided. The summons will be published on the Council’s website 5 working days before the meeting so that both Members of the Council and members of the public can view the Summons and reports before and during the remote meeting.

- 18. Members of Council** will be asked by the Chair of Council if they wish to speak. Members should indicate using the hand symbol on the Zoom Communication System if they wish to speak and when not speaking will be asked to have their microphone on “mute”. The Clerk may indicate through the Chair of Council who wishes to speak. The Chair of Council will then call on each Member in turn who indicated a wish to speak and ask them to turn on their microphone and camera when invited to speak and give their name. Members should only speak when invited and only one Member should speak at a time.
- 19. Debate** - When the Chair of Council considers that there has been sufficient debate they will call the debate to a close and remind the Members of the Council of the moved recommendation having been proposed and seconded.
- 20. Rules of Debate at Council meetings** – Procedure Rule 16 will be followed. Under this procedure rule Point 13 a,b,c allows a Member to move without comment at the conclusion of a speech of another Member that the Council proceed to the next item of business.
- 21.** Only the Chair of Council should exercise the discretion to mute another Member when they are speaking in the event that the Chair is of the opinion that the Member is persistently disregarding the ruling of the Chair or behaving irregularly or improperly.
- 22. Chair’s announcements** for the Chair to make any announcements to Members of the Council.
- 23. Disruption to remote conferencing** - In the event of individual link failures, the remote Member(s) will be deemed to have left the meeting at the point of failure and if the link cannot be re-established then the presumption will be that the meeting should continue. If the link is successfully re-established then the remote Member(s) will be deemed to have returned at the point of re-establishment. Subject to Point 12 above on proportionality.
- 24. Voting** - The Chair of Council will ask Council Members if there is general assent by all Council Members on the recommendation that Council are being required to vote on. If this is not the case then the voting will be done by the voting buttons in zoom. Members will be asked to click on the **Yes button to vote For, the No button to vote Against and the Go Faster button to Abstain**. The Committee Clerk will then advise the Chair of Council. The recommendation will be either be carried or lost depending on how the majority of Members vote. In the event of a TIED vote the Chair of Council will have the casting vote. This is subject to Point 12 above on proportionality.
- 25. Announcing vote result** - The Chair of Council will announce the vote results via the videoconference.
- 26. Point of Order** - A Member may raise a point of order or a personal explanation and shall be entitled to be heard forthwith. A point of order shall relate only to an alleged breach of a Rule or statutory provision and the Member shall specify the Rule or statutory provision and the way in which they consider it has been broken. A personal explanation shall be confined to some material part of a former speech by in the present debate which may appear to have been misunderstood. The ruling by the Chair of Council on a point of order or on the admissibility of a personal explanation shall not be open for discussion.
- 27. Petitions Under Procedure Rule 18** - should any petitions be submitted which have reached the required 25 signatures under Procedure Rule 18 will be followed.
- 28. Questions from the Public under Procedure Rule 15** – if any questions from the public are received and accepted to be presented to the Full Council

meeting Rule 15 will be followed where the questioner has the right to ask the question or the Chair of Council may read out the question. Answers will be given by the Leader or relevant Lead Member not lasting more than 3 minutes. With the Chair of Council's permission the questioner has the right to ask a supplementary question of the answer provided by the Leader or relevant Lead Member.

- 29. Questions and Reports to the Leader and Lead Members under Procedure Rule 14** – the Leader and Lead Member will have provided a written report to the Members of the Council. If they do not have a written report then no questions can be asked of it to them. Members can ask questions of the report if one is given and any oral update given at the meeting. Questions which have been submitted in writing to the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer and have been agreed to be included on the Council summons to the Leader or Lead Member will be answered in writing and the written answers provided in the published summons. The Member asking the question will be able to ask a supplementary question for up to one minute on the written answer provided by the Leader or Lead Member. The Leader or Lead Member will then be able to provide an answer to the supplementary question or agree to provide a written response after the meeting but within 5 working days after the meeting.
- 30. Questions and Reports to the Chairs of the Committees under Procedure Rule 14 - (Audit, Planning, Licensing and Regulatory Services)** Protocol point 29 will be followed.
- 31. MOTIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 11** – Motions will be considered and debated under Procedure Rule 11 and in the order presented on the Council Summons. The voting on the motions will be undertaken as detailed in Point 24. The proposer of the motion has up to 7 minutes to move the motion and the Secunder has up to five minutes to second the motion but the Secunder can reserve their right to speak to later in the debate. The Proposer is allowed a further 5 minutes to sum up at the end of the debate. All Members of the Council are able to speak on motion and will have up to 4 minutes to speak but they can only speak once. If an amendment is moved by the Proposer and secunder on a motion and accepted by Council or if the Proposer and secunder accept an amendment to a motion a vote on the amendment will take place first.
- 32. Decisions** The Full Council minutes will be published on the Council's website in time for the next meeting of the Full Council.
- 33. Recording** - All meetings will be recorded apart from any Part II Confidential Items of business (see Point 13 above).
- 34. This protocol** is a guide as to how virtual/remote Full Council meetings should be conducted. This protocol will sit alongside the Council's Procedure Rules set out in the Council Constitution and are considered good practice and etiquette.
- 35. The Chair of Council** has the discretion to amend this Protocol as necessary but not where it impacts on the Council Procedure Rules.