

VIRTUAL MEETINGS PROCEDURE RULES (VMPR)

These rules have been made by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with Article 15.4 (b) of the Council's Constitution in order to implement The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panels Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (the 'Regulations') and will remain in force until those Regulations are repealed.

VMPR1 - VIRTUAL MEETINGS

1.1 Virtual meetings generally

A virtual meeting is a meeting of the Council, Cabinet, Committee or Sub-committee of the Council held by remote access and where remote attendance by Members of the Council is by way of video conferencing and access by audio.

1.2 Holding virtual meetings

The Council, Cabinet and all Committees of the Council may hold all such virtual meetings that are deemed necessary and where such meetings are held these rules of procedure shall apply.

VMPR2 - AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING PROCEDURE RULES

Where the Council holds a virtual meeting, the existing provisions in the Council Procedure Rules, Executive Procedure Rules, Access to Information Procedure Rules, Overview and Scrutiny and Non-Executive (Regulatory) Committee Procedure Rules listed in the table at Annex 1 of these rules shall be suspended or amended in respect of that meeting. For the avoidance of doubt, where there is any inconsistency between these rules and existing provisions in the Council's Constitution, these rules shall take precedence.

VMPR3 - NOTICE OF MEETINGS

3.1 Calling urgent virtual meetings

The Proper Officer may, following consultation with the relevant Chair, call an urgent virtual meeting without notice. The reasons for calling an urgent virtual meeting shall be clearly stated at the beginning of the urgent virtual meeting.

3.2 Moving or cancelling virtual meetings

The Proper Officer may, following consultation with the Chair of the relevant virtual meeting, move or cancel a virtual meeting without notice.

VMPR4 - ACCESS TO VIRTUAL MEETINGS

4.1 Members of the Council

Members of the Council will access virtual meetings through video conferencing facilities, including Zoom, Skype or Microsoft Teams. A Member in remote attendance is present and attends the meeting, where they can hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable be seen, by other Members in attendance and any members of the public.

4.2 Press and members of the public

Virtual meetings will be held/located on Zoom or Microsoft Teams and live web cast on Youtube. The press and members of the public will be able to view virtual meetings through the live webcast. Links to meetings will be available through the Council website.

4.3 Exclusion of press and members of the public – exempt information

The press and members of the public will not be able to access meetings considering exempt information and those meetings will not be webcast.

VMPR5 – PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS PARTICIPATION

Members of the public, and councillors who are not members of the committee, panel or body, will be able to participate in virtual meetings in the following ways:

- (a) Statements, questions and petitions can be submitted in advance of the meeting.
- (b) Statements will be made available to all members of the virtual meeting; however, members of the public and councillors may not be able to present their statement in the virtual meeting unless the Chair and committee speaking scheme permits.
- (c) Questions will receive a written response. Supplementary questions may be permitted.
- (d) Public petitions will be received by the chair of the meeting without debate and sent to the relevant Cabinet member, committee or Council officer for a response.

VMPR6 - VOTING

Voting at virtual meetings shall take place through the voting system within the video conference, or by a show of hands, or by a roll call, or by each member stating their vote, or by members indicating an abstention or vote against (all other votes to be taken as being in favour), which will be counted and announced by the clerk.

VMPR7 - REVIEW

These rules will be kept under regular review and updated as necessary by the Monitoring Officer under Article 15.4 (b) of the Council's Constitution.

Annex 1

Provision		Amendment/suspension
Council Procedure Rules (CPR) Part 4A		
CPR 1	Requirement that Full Council hold an AGM.	Suspended
CPR 4	Annual meeting will appoint Chair and Vice-Chair of Council	Suspended
CPR 7	Appointment of Committees at AGM	Suspended
CPR 18	Quorum	Amended by VMPR 4.1
CPRs 32, 33, 34	Petitions, questions and statements from public and councillors	VMPR5 shall take precedence in the event of any inconsistency.
CPR 43	Standing to speak for closure motions	Suspended
CPR 45	Voting	Amended by VMPR6
Access to Information Procedure Rules (APR) Part 4B		
APR 3	Rights to attend meetings	Suspended by VMPR4.2
APR 5	Access to Agenda and Reports before the meeting	...open to inspection 'includes publication on the website of the council'
APR 6	Supply of copies	'on payment of a charge for postage and any other costs' removed as electronic version available
Executive Procedure Rules (EPR) Part 4D		
EPR 29, 30, 31	Petitions, questions and statements from public and councillors	VMPR5 shall take precedence in the event of any inconsistency.
Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules Part 4E		
OSR 30, 31, 32	Petitions, questions and statements from public and councillors	VMPR5 shall take precedence in the event of any inconsistency.
Non-Executive Committee (Regulatory) Procedure Rules Part 4F		
Rules 32, 33, 34	Petitions, questions and statements from public and Councillors	VMPR5 shall take precedence in the event of any inconsistency.

*Agreed by Officer Delegated Decision of Monitoring Officer 29th April 2020
Amended by Officer Delegated Decision of Monitoring Officer 22nd May 2020 and 1st June 2020*