

POLICY

TITLE:	ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS VIA AUDIO OR AUDIOVISUAL CONFERENCING SYSTEM		
DIVISON:	COUNCIL		
ADOPTED BY:	COUNCIL		
DATE TO TAKE EFFECT:	OCTOBER 2020	DATE OF REVIEW:	OCTOBER 2025
MOTION NUMBER:	OC 318/20 – 29 October 2020		
POLICY NUMBER:	CP 67		
LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE:	Sections 95(3)(a) and 98(3)(a) of the Local Government Act 2019		

PURPOSE:

This policy authorises members' attendance at meetings via audio or audiovisual conferencing system and outlines the responsibilities associated with utilising a conferencing system.

1. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy:

meeting includes any meeting of Council, audit committee, Council committee, or local authority.

member means a member of Council, audit committee, Council committee or local authority.

2. PRINCIPLE

Council is committed to facilitate access and participation in meetings by permitting members to be present and participate remotely via audio or audiovisual conferencing system if specific needs arise.

3. APPLICATION OF POLICY

3.1 Attendance

It is preferable that members attend meetings in person and members are encouraged to do so where possible. However, a member may attend a meeting via audio or audiovisual conferencing system.

Except in cases of emergency, members will give at least one (1) days written notice to the CEO that they intend to attend a meeting via audio or audiovisual conferencing system and the reason(s) for not being physically present at the meeting.

3.2 CEO responsibilities

The CEO will ensure the provision of an adequate conferencing system and information that enables members to attend.

3.3 Chairing the meeting

If the Chair is attending the meeting via audio or audiovisual conferencing system, the Chair may decide to delegate the function of chairing the meeting to the deputy, or if there is no deputy, another member.

3.4 General responsibilities

A member in attendance via audiovisual conferencing system is to consider the appropriateness of their personal presentation and surrounding environment.

The Chair is to confirm which participants are present at the commencement of the meeting.

A member who is attending by audio or audiovisual means must advise the Chair if they are about to leave the meeting. A member must also advise the Chair if they re-join the meeting. These details are to be recorded in the minutes with a reference to the member's time of departure and time of return.

Meeting minutes will identify whether each member attended in person or via audio or audiovisual means.

3.5 Conflicts of interests

Where a conflict is declared, the member must disconnect from the conferencing system prior to the discussion of the particular agenda item.

If member has disconnected from the conferencing system due to a declared conflict, the Chair will contact the member as soon as the agenda item has concluded and invite the member to re-join the meeting.

3.6 Confidentiality

Members attending meetings remotely will:

- (a) ensure that people in their presence who are not members cannot see, overhear or listen to the member or the meeting (unless the Council is aware and accepts the circumstances); and
- (b) not record the meeting.

3.7 Voting

To ensure the participation of any members attending remotely, the Chair will confirm that members attending remotely are able to hear the discussion and vote.

If a member is attending via an audio conferencing system without video capability, the Chair is to ask for verbal confirmation of the member's vote. If a member is attending via audiovisual conferencing system, the Chair is to ask for the member's vote by show of hands or verbal confirmation.

5. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Within six (6) months of a new term of Council.