

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Enabling Remote Attendance and Proxy Voting at Local Authority Meetings – Consultation Response

10 December 2024

Report of Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections

PURPOSE OF REPORT

For the Committee to consider responding to the Government consultation on Remote Meetings and Proxy Voting at Local Authority Meetings published on 24 October 2024.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) The Committee notes that:**
 - (a) the Government is consulting on Enabling Remote Meetings and Proxy Voting at Local Authority Meetings, with a deadline date for responses of 19 December 2024;**
 - (b) individual Councillors, political groups and members of the public may make their own responses.**

- (2) The Committee is asked to:**
 - (a) Consider making a response to the online consultation on behalf of the City Council, working through the 13 consultation questions reproduced at Appendix A of this report during the meeting;**
 - (b) That, if agreement on a response cannot be reached at the meeting tonight, the response be agreed by email, following the meeting.**

1.0 Consultation

- 1.1** On 24 October 2024, the Government's Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government published an eight-week consultation on enabling remote meetings and proxy voting at Local Authority Meetings. The Consultation is available online here: [Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings - GOV.UK](#)

- 1.2** The consultation is being carried to recognise that there are circumstances in which it may not always be possible for Councillors to attend Council meetings in person. With

that in mind the government intends to amend the law to introduce provisions for remote attendance at local authority meetings. In addition, the consultation seeks views on the possible introduction of proxy voting for those occasions when an Councillor, due to personal circumstances, may be unable to attend even remotely, for example during maternity, paternity or adoption leave.

- 1.3 The consultation seeks views on the detail and practical implications of the propositions to inform the Government's ongoing policy development.

2.0 Draft Response

- 2.1 As the consultation is online, the appendix reproduces the questions and the choices that are offered online for the Committee to work through at the meeting with the Senior Manager, Democratic Support and Elections.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 The Committee is requested to consider making a response to the consultation. The questions are appended to the report for the Committee to go through.
- 3.2 If the Committee needs more time following the meeting to formulate a response, this can be done via email following the meeting, should the Committee resolve to do so.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

As this is simply a response to a consultation, no legal implications have been identified.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As above.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces

None identified.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The S151 Officer has been consulted and has no comment.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comment.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings - GOV.UK](#)

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