

# CARMARTHENSHIRE DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

*“Supporting the delivery of the democratic function and enabling our customers to carry out their role”*

## REMOTE ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Produced by Carmarthenshire Democratic Services.

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## *Introduction*

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This guidance has been produced to assist both members and officers in attending remote meetings of the Council, and its various Committees during the Covid19 pandemic.

Democratic Services will facilitate each remote meeting and will control the technology employed for remote access and attendance. Democratic Services will manage public and Member interaction, engagement and connections on the instruction of the Chair.

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## *Before the meeting*

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- Join the meeting no later than 15 minutes before the start to allow the Democratic Services Officers to gain an accurate list of people in attendance and the opportunity to resolve any equipment issues.
- Make sure your equipment is fully charged or plugged in to a mains socket as remote meetings can use a lot of battery.
- Make sure your mobile phone is switched off or on silent.
- Consider your personal appearance and background, check what people can see behind and in front of you, be careful not to allow exempt or confidential papers to be seen in the video-feed.
- Remember once on camera everyone can see your surroundings, try to ensure you are in a room by yourself with no distractions (i.e. family members or pets will be seen in the background). If possible, arrange for a non-descript background .
- Make sure you have read the paperwork before the meeting. Prepare thoroughly as the Chair will assume that everyone has read the reports, any contributions are necessary and the debate is focussed.
- All members and officers (apart from the Chair) will be muted at commencement of the meeting. Members and officers will also be asked to turn off their cameras if not speaking, as this helps to stabilise broadband connection.

- To ensure you can see your paperwork, we suggest that you view your paperwork on your ipad and use your laptop for attending remotely. Alternatively, you can split your laptop or ipad screen.
  - [Split Screen Guide for laptops](#)
  - [Split Screen Guide for iPads](#)
- To maintain confidentiality and ensure you abide by the Code of Conduct, **you must be alone when exempt reports are considered.**

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### *During the meeting*

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- The Democratic Services Officer will note the participants.
- The Chair will welcome everyone to the meeting and outline how the meeting will work
- The Democratic Services Officer will confirm the persons in attendance.
- To aid the meeting arrangements, if you know in advance that you wish to speak, please notify the Chair or the Democratic Services Officer before the meeting starts. If you wish to speak, please use the 'raise your hand facility'.



- If you require Welsh to English simultaneous translation, you should click on the interpreter button and select 'English'.

- Only speak when invited to by the Chair. Speakers should announce their name **before making a comment**. When referring to a specific report, page, or slide, mention the page number so that all members have a clear understanding of what is being discussed at all times.
- Only turn your microphone and camera on once you have been called to speak by the Chair. Once you have finished speaking remember to turn your microphone and camera off.
- Only one person may speak at any one time.
- Normal constitution rules apply.
- Where members of the public are exercising speaking rights at the meeting via remote attendance, the Chair will as part of their introduction explain the procedure for their participation which will reflect those relevant elements of the above. Members of the public must adhere to this procedure.
- Remember, the meeting may be open to the public or webcast so it is important to conduct yourself as you would in any public meeting.

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### *Voting*

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- When the Chair is satisfied that there has been sufficient debate, the Chair will call for a proposer and seconder for the item being discussed and progress to making a decision. Unless a Recorded Vote is called (Council meeting only) the method of voting will be at the Chair's discretion and will be by one of the following methods:
  - Show of hands (using the 'raise hand' button )
  - By calling out the name of each member to ask if they are for, against or abstaining from the vote.
- As is normal procedure, details of how Members voted will not be kept or minuted unless a Recorded Vote is called.

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### *Exempt Items*

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- If a Committee agenda includes an exempt report the Democratic Services Officer may arrange a separate meeting entry in your calendars. In these instances, members will be asked to leave the 'public' meeting and join the separate call.

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#### *Other useful sources of information*

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A WLGA general remote attendance document is also available and can be viewed via the following link:-

<https://www.wlga.wales/SharedFiles/Download.aspx?pageid=62&fileid=2716&mid=665>