



# Connah's Quay Town Council

Title:	<b>Protocol on Multi Location Meetings</b>
Approved by:	Town Council.
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Next review date:	2028

## **1. Introduction.**

The Town Council meetings which are open to the members of the public are to be accessible both in person and remotely.

The Town Council proposes that although the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 Section 47 (2a) states:

*(a) in the case of local authority meetings that do not fall within paragraph (b), to speak to and be heard by each other (whether or not the equipment or facility enables those persons to see and be seen by each other)'*

Connah's Quay Town Council will ensure all persons attending its meetings either in person or remotely will be able to see and be seen by each other.

## **2. Behaviours**

The Council will not accept or tolerate any inappropriate behaviours, comments, postings or contributions.

Standing Orders still apply to multi location meetings. However, given the immediate and potentially highly offensive nature of online abuse any suspected infringement will result in the host muting the feed from the alleged offender and returning them to the waiting room.

At the direction of the meeting Chair, the host will close the connection to the party concerned if possible. If it is not possible to exclude any contribution or contributor then the meeting may be terminated on the direction of the Chair and resumed immediately afterwards, excluding the party concerned.

## **3. Meeting Venues**

All meetings will continue to take place in either the Council Chamber, Quay Building, Fron Road or any premises owned by the Town Council.

## **4. Before the Meeting**

- The Town Clerk will host and arrange the virtual meeting room and publish the agenda including access information.



## Connah's Quay Town Council

- Councillors are asked to notify the Town Clerk prior to the meeting if they intend attending remotely, so that if any technology issues arise the Clerk and Chairs is aware.
- Councillors to raise any concerns with access and technology issues.
- All Councillors must use the hand icon or raise their hand to either speak or vote.

### 5. Start of Meeting

- The Town Clerk will open the remote meeting room before the advertised start time of the meeting.
- All Councillors, whether attending remotely or in person will ensure their names are displayed, to allow any members of the public attending to recognise who is speaking.
- The host (Town Clerk or Deputy) will admit participants to the meeting.
- All participants will be muted as they enter the meeting room, but ensure their video is enabled.
- All participants will be asked to test their connection to ensure that they can hear and be heard by others.
- Unless being used for remote access to the meeting, all participants' mobile phones should be switched off or switched to silent.

### 6. During the Meeting

- The host (Town Clerk) will admit viewers to the meeting who will remain muted, but ensure their video is enabled at all times, to ensure they comply with the need to be seen and heard by the Members who are attending the meeting in person.
- The Chair will welcome everyone to the meeting.
- The meeting protocol is the same as it would be in a traditional meeting in the Council Chamber.
- Main points:
  - All contributions to the meeting must go through the Chair
  - Agenda items will be introduced by the Chair
  - Councillors must raise their hand either in person or by using the remote hand icon and wait to be invited to speak by the Chair
  - Councillors may discuss the matter or ask questions which may be answered
  - Any members of the public who wish to put forward views (and who are invited to do so by the Chair) may do so
  - The discussion may be summed up by the Chair, and motions moved
  - The participants will be invited to vote by clear show of hands and these must remain raised until completion of the count, as instructed by the Chair or Clerk.
- If any Councillor (participant) leaves the meeting for whatever reason, this will be recorded in the minutes. If the Councillor (participant) re-joins the meeting, this will be noted in the minutes.



## Connah's Quay Town Council

- If a Councillor, who is attending remotely declares an interest, the Councillor (unless dispensation has been granted to speak) will be removed to the 'waiting room' by the Town Clerk and readmitted once the item has been discussed.

The chat function will not be used during the meeting, this is to ensure attention is on those persons speaking or waiting to speak.

### **7. Confidential Matters (Part 2 – Exclusion of Press/Public)**

- If there is confidential business for discussion and consideration, members of the public/press will be placed in the waiting room for the duration of the agenda item. Once the item has been concluded, they will be re-admitted to the meeting.
- Councillors' remote participation in any Part 2 – Confidential item must ensure their camera is activated and confirm their sole presence in the room before engaging in deliberations. Any member in remote attendance who failed to disclose that there were in fact persons present who were so entitled would be in breach of their Code of Conduct responsibilities.

### **8. Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting**

- No prior permission is required in photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting the proceedings of a meeting. It is advisable that any person wishing to film the meeting, out of courtesy informs the Town Council.
- Photographing, recording, broadcasting or transmitting must not cause any disruption to the meeting. Should this occur, the person may be asked to cease recording and may be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.
- Press/public will not be permitted to have access to any recordings involving a Part 2 – confidential item.
- The Town Council is not liable for the actions of any persons making a recording at or of a Town Council meeting which identifies a member of the public or for any publication of that meeting.
- The Town Council records the meetings to assist with the accuracy of the minutes only. The recordings are not published.
- The printed and signed minutes of the Town Council meeting remain the statutory and legally binding formal record of Town Council decisions.