

Recommendations for remote attendance at meetings for Members, Officers and the Public

Members of the Council and Officers

*'Members and Officers in remote attendance at a meeting should be able to hear, and where possible see, and be so heard and, where possible, be seen by, the members in attendance'.**

Our suggestion

Check that all participants have laptops/PCs/tablets equipped with headphones for best audio quality or failing that; microphones and speakers. Use Skype or Zoom Pro (basic version of Zoom limited to 40 minute meetings) Skype max 50 participants. Zoom max 100 participants.

Members of the Public exercising their right to speak at meetings

*'Members of the public entitled to attend the meeting who are accessing the meeting remotely and who exercise a right to speak at the meeting should be heard and where possible seen by members and other members of the public who are accessing the meeting remotely'.**

Our suggestion

Members of the public intending to speak should be emailed an invitation to join the meeting. These attendees will be easily identified by the clerk. If Part 2 items are to be discussed, the clerk can remove those not entitled to participate using the tools provided.

Members of the public

*Provision must be made for meetings to be 'open to the public' by remote means including (but not limited to) video conferencing, live webcast, and live interactive streaming.**

Our suggestion (offered at no cost to you until July 31st 2020)

We suggest that remotely attended public meetings are **'audio webcast'** live to your website using Audiominutes and archived for later publishing.

A typical set-up is shown on the right. A public meeting on Zoom is underway. The built in microphone in the tablet picks up the meeting audio from the speakers in the laptop and Audiominutes webcasts this to your website through a player provided by us.



(* paraphrased from Coronavirus Flexibility of Local Authority regs Meetings 2020)

Keep it as simple as possible! - clerking a remotely attended meeting is likely to be fraught at times, we suggest you don't add to the pressure by opting for technically complex solutions!

The most important thing is to ensure that the meeting audio is captured, and you can use any means at your disposal to do this - Audiominutes can then process whatever we receive into our preferred format and make it available to the public via your website.

(If your Council already use CIVICA/modern.gov or CMIS systems then different processes apply - please ask for details)

The steps required by the person clerking the meeting are as follows:

- 1 Contact Audiominutes for your free account credentials.
- 2 Download the Audiominutes app on an Android device (phone or tablet) (search Audiominutes on Google Play).
- 3 Add your Audiominutes ID in 'settings'.
- 4 Ask your web team to embed the [Audiominutes player code in your website](#) See example player below) this is where the public will be able to hear live and recorded meetings.
- 5 Follow instructions [here](#) to 'Create your Meetings' and set up a forthcoming meeting on our platform. (not necessary for CIVICA or CMIS customers)
- 6 Place the phone or tablet next to the computer that you are using for the Zoom or Skype call and use the built in microphone in the phone or tablet to pick up audio from all participants. Those councils who have an Audiominutes attenuator could improve audio quality by connecting the computer being used for the conference with the phone or tablet and microphone through an [audio splitter](#) such as this.
- 7 Audio webcast the meeting in real time and subsequently publish the recorded version of the meeting to your CMIS page - all this can be done via the Audiominutes app.

[An example of the Audiominutes player embedded in a web page](#)

Live streaming from a Group Meeting

Perhaps you'll decide to live stream your via one of the common platforms - our view is that platforms that require members of the public to create an account to see and/or hear a public meeting should be avoided; Facebook being the best example of this.

Streaming live from one of the commonly used communication platforms can be fiddly - here are some links explaining how this can be achieved.

[Streaming Live from a Skype Group Meeting](#)

[Streaming Live from a Google Hangouts Meeting](#)

[Streaming Live from a Zoom Meeting](#)

Please contact antony.redfern@audiominutes.com or call 07973 233446 for further details.

(* paraphrased from Coronavirus Flexibility of Local Authority regs Meetings 2020)