

Virtual Meetings – Guidelines

- Guests can only gain access with the meeting code and password. Details will be sent upon request to the Parish Clerk. This will also be sent by way of summons to Parish Councillors, District and County Councillors.
- Guests will first arrive in a virtual waiting room and will only be permitted into the meeting after being admitted by the host.
- The Clerk will act as the host. Councillors will be allowed into the meeting room first, followed by District & County Councillors if present and then Members of the Press and Public.
- Council meetings must still be advertised and the public have a right to observe and be given the opportunity to comment during the usual public forum.
- If there are any confidential matters for discussion the Press and Public will be moved to the waiting room during these discussions and readmitted once they have been concluded.
- The host will be able to mute all guests unless they are speaking.
- The host will be able to remove any guests who disrupt proceedings.
- Councillors should ensure that they have familiarised themselves with any documents (e.g. planning applications) prior to the meeting.
- The Chairman will manage the meeting. The Clerk will host and manage the guests.
- Votes will be on a show of hands for those on video, or by a show of an electronic hand. Those who are only gaining access to the meeting by telephone will be verbally asked for their vote.
- The meeting can only go ahead with a quorum (for Althorne this is 3 councillors).
- The public will only be allowed to speak during the Public Forum as listed in the agenda.
- In general Councillors should try to keep our usual approach to meetings and stick to standing orders as much as you can.
- It is worth remembering that the required standards of behaviour and discussion is the same whether in remote or face to face meetings.
- Declaring interests – Councillors should declare interests in the same manner as face to face meetings and if the interest is Pecuniary they will be moved by the host to the waiting room during the relevant discussion and then readmitted.
- The minutes should be agreed at the next meeting but can be retrospectively signed at the next face to face meeting.

Information compiled from various sources including Parish Clerks Forums, EALC, SLCC, NALC