

# **VIRTUAL MEETINGS PROCEDURE RULES (VMPR)**

These rules have been made by the Monitoring Officer in accordance with Article 17.02(c) of the Council's Constitution in order to implement The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panels Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (the 'Regulations') and will remain in force until those Regulations are repealed.

## **VMPR1**

### **VIRTUAL MEETINGS**

#### **VMPR1.1**

##### **Virtual meetings generally**

A virtual meeting is a meeting of the Council, Cabinet, Committee or Sub-committee of the Council held by remote access and where remote attendance by Members of the Council is by way of video conferencing.

#### **VMPR1.2**

##### **Holding virtual meetings**

The Council, Cabinet and all Committees of the Council may hold all such virtual meetings that are deemed necessary and where such meetings are held these rules of procedure shall apply.

## **VMPR2**

### **AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING PROCEDURE RULES**

Where the Council holds a virtual meeting, the existing provisions in the Council Procedure Rules, Committee Procedure Rules, Executive Procedure Rules, Access to Information Procedure Rules and Licensing Committee Procedure Rules listed in the table at Annex 1 of these rules shall be suspended or amended in respect of that meeting. For the avoidance of doubt, where there is any inconsistency between these rules and existing provisions in the Council's Constitution, these rules shall take precedence.

## **VMPR3**

### **NOTICE OF MEETINGS**

#### **VMPR3.1**

##### **Calling urgent virtual meetings**

The Proper Officer may, following consultation with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, call an urgent virtual meeting without notice. The reasons for calling an urgent virtual meeting shall be clearly stated at the beginning of the urgent virtual meeting.

## **VMPR3.2**

### **Moving or cancelling virtual meetings**

The Proper Officer may, following consultation with the Chair of the relevant virtual meeting move or cancel a virtual meeting without notice.

## **VMPR4**

### **ACCESS TO VIRTUAL MEETINGS**

#### **VMPR4.1**

##### **Members of the Council**

Members of the Council will attend virtual meetings through teleconferencing facilities.

#### **VMPR4.2**

##### **Press and members of the public**

Virtual meetings will be live webcast and broadcast on YouTube. The press and members of the public will be able to access virtual meetings through the live webcast. Links to meetings will be available through the [Council website](#).

#### **VMPR4.3**

##### **Exclusion of press and members of the public – exempt information**

The press and members of the public will not be able to access meetings considering exempt information and those meetings will not be webcast.

## **VMPR5**

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

#### **VMPR5.1**

##### **Public participation - generally**

Members of the public will be able to participate in all virtual meetings in the following ways:

- (a) Public statements, questions and petitions can be submitted in advance of the meeting and will be published on the Council's website.
- (b) Public statements will be made available to all members of the virtual meeting, however members of the public will not be able to present their statement in the virtual meeting.
- (c) Public questions will receive a written response. No supplementary questions will be permitted.
- (d) Public petitions will be received by the chair of the meeting without debate and sent to the relevant executive member, committee or council officer for a response.

## **VMPR5.2**

### **Public participation – attendance at virtual meetings**

Notwithstanding VMPR5.1, the Chair of any virtual meeting may, in consultation with the Proper Officer, permit any of the following additional forms of public participation in a virtual meeting:

- (a) the ability for a member of the public to attend a virtual meeting to ask up to two questions about any matters on the agenda for that virtual meeting. A member of the public may ask up to two supplementary questions;
- (b) the ability for a member of the public to attend a virtual meeting to make a statement about any matter on the agenda for that virtual meeting;
- (c) the ability for a member of the public to attend a virtual meeting to present a petition.

## **VMPR5.3**

### **Public participation – further provisions**

Where VMPR5.2 applies, the following procedure shall be followed.

- (a) the agenda for any virtual meeting will state whether members of the public are able to attend the virtual meeting;
- (b) a member of the public will only be entitled to attend a virtual meeting to exercise the rights in VMPR5.2 and for no other purpose;
- (c) where a member of the public intends to attend a virtual meeting to exercise the rights in VMPR5.2, they shall give at least two clear working days notice to the Council's Democratic Engagement Service of their intention to do so;
- (d) any member of the public attending a virtual meeting shall comply with all such instructions about attendance at a virtual meeting as provided to them by the Council's Democratic Engagement Service;
- (e) the Chair of any virtual meeting may, in consultation with the Proper Officer, determine the maximum number of members of the public who may attend a virtual meeting or that a member of the public shall not be permitted to attend a virtual meeting or that they shall be excluded from a virtual meeting.

## **VMPR6**

### **VOTING**

Voting at virtual meetings shall take place through the voting system within the video conference or by a show of hands or by a roll call at Full Council.

## **VMPR7**

### **REVIEW**

These rules will be kept under regular review and updated as necessary by the Monitoring Officer under Article 17.02(c) of the Council's Constitution.



## Annex 1

Provision		Amendment/suspension
<b>Council Procedure Rules (CPR)</b>		
<b>CPR2.1(1)</b>	Requirement that Full Council hold seven ordinary meetings annually	Suspended
<b>CPR10</b>	Petitions, questions and statements	VMPR5 shall take precedence in the event of any inconsistency.
<b>CPR13.2</b>	Right to require motion or amendment in writing	'handed' replaced by 'emailed'
<b>CPR15.1(b)</b>	Motion to rescind a previous decision	'placed in writing' replaced by 'emailed'
<b>CPR19.1/2</b>	Standing to speak	Suspended
<b>Access to Information Procedure Rules (APR)</b>		
<b>APR6(iii)</b>	Supply of copies	'on payment of a charge for postage and any other costs' removed
<b>APR9</b>	Summary of the rights of the public	'at City Hall, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR' replaced by 'on the Council's website'
<b>Executive Procedure Rules (EPR)</b>		
<b>EPR4</b>	Public forum (questions and statements)	VMPR5 shall take precedence in the event of any inconsistency.
<b>EPR5</b>	Questions from councillors and the public	VMPR5 shall take precedence in the event of any inconsistency.
<b>Committee Procedure Rules (CMR)</b>		
<b>CMR9</b>	Petitions, questions and statements	VMPR5 shall take precedence in the event of any inconsistency.
<b>CMR9.3(a)</b>	Notice of questions	'by delivering it in writing or' removed
<b>CMR9.6</b>	Record of questions	after the word 'inspection' insert 'and make available on the Council's website'
<b>CMR11.2</b>	Right to require motion or amendment in writing	'handed' replaced by 'emailed'
<b>CMR12.1(b)</b>	Motion to rescind a previous decision	'placed in writing' replaced by 'emailed'
<b>Licensing Committee Procedure Rules (LCR)</b>		
<b>LRC6</b>	Notice of and summons to meetings	'at the council's principal office' replaced by 'on the Council's website'
<b>CMR9</b>	Petitions, questions and statements	VMPR5 shall take precedence in the event of any inconsistency.

<b>LCR9.1(a)</b>	Petitions, questions and statements	'in writing or' removed
<b>LCR9.4(a)</b>	Notice of questions	'in writing or' removed
<b>LCR11.2</b>	Right to require motion or amendment in writing	'handed' replaced by 'emailed'

The table is intended to capture both the existing rules which are inconsistent with the Regulations for purpose of clarity and ease of reference and those that are being amended at the Council's discretion in order to facilitate virtual meetings. It should be noted that any rules that have not been referenced in this table, but that are nonetheless inconsistent with the Regulations will be disapplied by virtue of Regulation 5(5).