

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	9 September, 2014
SUBJECT	Remote Attendance
PURPOSE	To seek the committee's views on amendments to the Constitution
AUTHOR	Geraint George Head of Democratic Services

1. The members of the committee will recall that the committee has discussed remote attendance at committees in the past. During those discussions, there has been agreement about allowing remote attendance at committees from the other Council office locations at Dolgellau and Pwllheli.
2. There are, of course, some possible complications related to such a development with issues such as the quorum for meetings and what happens should the equipment fail at any time. The technology for enabling that access including the provision of translation services through the equipment is now in place and is being tested prior to its formal use.
3. A draft copy of a Council Procedural Order to deal with such eventualities is attached for the committee's observations.
4. The specific questions that require the committee's attention are:-
 - Which committees should be listed in 4.17.2 as the only ones for which remote attendance is allowed bearing in mind that the committee in the past has favoured committees where the vote is not so crucial?
 - How many days' notice are required – 4.17.3?
 - Do we need rule 4.17.4 and 4.17.5? (Statute states that we must have 4.17.5). Does having two rules complicate the operation of the committee without adding much to their management? 4.17.4 prevents members who attend remotely from counting towards the quorum and therefore there must be at least a quarter of the members in the meeting room. 4.17.5 deals with the balance between those attending remotely and those in the meeting room.
 - What percentage should be included in 17.5? It is possible to have a percentage above 30% but not less.
5. The committee is invited to express its views on the draft attached so that they can be processed for inclusion in the Council's Constitution in due course.

PROCEDURAL ORDER 4.17 REMOTE ATTENDANCE

- 4.17.1 Video-conferencing facilities are provided at the Council Offices in Dolgellau and Pwllheli and in the Dafydd Orwig Chamber and Hywel Dda Chamber in Caernarfon to allow members to attend meetings without being present in the meeting room ("remote attendance"), under the following conditions.
- 4.17.2 Members will only be able to attend remotely at meetings of the [scrutiny committees, the Democratic Services Committee and Language Committee].
- 4.17.3 Members wishing to attend remotely must give at least [5 days'] notice of their wish to the Head of Democratic Services. On receiving such a notice, the Head of Democratic Services will make the necessary arrangements (including the provision of translation) to allow the member to attend remotely
- 4.17.4 No member attending remotely will count towards the quorum of the meeting.
- 4.17.5 At any time, there will be no quorum at the meeting if the number of members in the room where the meeting is held is less than [30%] of all the members attending the meeting (whether in the room or attending remotely)
- 4.17.6 The failure of any technological provision (whether that leads to a partial or complete loss of contact shall not invalidate any part of the deliberations or any vote taken. The Chairman may postpone the meeting if they deem that appropriate.