



Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board

To: Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board

On: 25 February 2022

Report
by
Clerk

Governance Arrangements

1. Summary

Protocol for Hybrid Meetings

- 1.1 At the meeting of this Joint Board held on 19 November 2021 it was decided that future meetings of the Joint Board be hybrid meetings and that arrangements be made to hold these meetings in the Council Chamber in Renfrewshire House allowing members to either attend meetings 'in person' or join remotely using Microsoft Teams.
- 1.2 It was further decided that the Clerk, in consultation with the Convener and Depute Convener, be requested to develop a protocol for the conduct of hybrid meetings.
- 1.3 A copy of the protocol for hybrid meetings is appended to this report and members are requested to consider and approve the protocol.

Clerk and Treasurer

- 1.4 Ken Graham, Head of Corporate Governance, is Clerk to the Joint Board. Ken retires from Renfrewshire Council on 28 February 2022 and Mark Conaghan has been appointed as Head of Corporate Governance with effect from 1 March 2022 and will be Clerk to the Joint Board from that date.
- 1.5 Alan Russell, Treasurer to the Joint Board, was appointed to the position of Chief Executive, Renfrewshire Council, on 12 November 2021. Alastair MacArthur has been appointed as Director of Finance & Resources and will be Treasurer to the Joint Board with effect from 16 February 2022.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the protocol for hybrid meetings, as appended to this report, be approved; and
- 2.2 That it be noted that Mark Conaghan will be Clerk to the Joint Board with effect from 1 March 2022 and that Alastair MacArthur will be Treasurer to the Joint Board with effect from 16 February 2022.

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Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board- Protocol for Hybrid Meetings

A. Introduction

1. On 19 November 2021 the Joint Board approved a report setting out the arrangements for the introduction of Joint Board meetings which allowed some members to be present at a meeting in Renfrewshire Council's Chamber and others to access the same meeting remotely. These are referred to as "hybrid meetings" for the purposes of this document.
2. Further, that the Clerk, in consultation with the Convener and Depute Convener, be requested to develop a protocol for the conduct of hybrid meetings.
3. This document is the protocol for the conduct of hybrid meetings for the purposes of the Joint Board authorisation. The protocol is supplemental to the Joint Board's procedural standing orders, which will continue to apply to meetings except to the extent that they are inconsistent with the terms of this protocol.

B. Background

1. There have been no Joint Board meetings held in the offices of East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde or Renfrewshire Councils since March 2020. Instead, meetings have taken place remotely, most recently using the Microsoft Teams platform.
2. The gradual easing of Government restrictions relating to the control of the Covid-19 pandemic has now made it possible for elected members to return to their respective Chambers to attend Council and Board meetings although that return is subject to whatever Government guidance is in place at the date of each Council or Board meeting.
3. The arrangements set out in this protocol currently apply in Renfrewshire Council and are based on applying a physical distance requirement of at least 2 metres. This requirement restricts the number of people who are able to be present in Renfrewshire's Council Chamber for each meeting.
4. The maximum number of people who may be present in Renfrewshire Council's Chamber is determined by the number of available seats taking into account the physical distancing requirements.
5. The maximum number is currently 26. This comprises the following:
 - 18 seats with microphones
 - 3 seats for clerks (no microphones)
 - 5 seats in the public gallery (no microphones).

6. There are 16 elected members on the Joint Board. Therefore, all members of the Joint Board would be able to attend meetings in Renfrewshire House.
7. It may be the case that most officers attending Joint Board meetings which are being held in Renfrewshire's Council Chamber will continue to do so remotely. The Convener may wish to discuss with the Assessor & Electoral Registration Officer if he wishes to have certain officers present in the Chamber.

C. Prior to the Meeting

1. The Notice calling the meeting will specify that the meeting will be hybrid and that elected members will in some circumstances be able to attend the meeting in person in Renfrewshire's Council Chamber while others will be able to access the meeting remotely.
2. The Chair must be present in the Chamber. If the Chair is unable to attend the meeting, the Vice-Chair must be present in the Chamber.
3. Members should provide at least 24 hours' notice to the Clerk that they intend attending the meeting remotely, unless this is unavoidable for circumstances outwith their control.
4. All members with the exception of the Chair will be invited as "attendees".
5. All members attending a meeting in the Chamber should bring their own laptop with them to allow them to access emails. This will enable them to see any amendments circulated at the meeting. Members should ensure their laptop is fully charged before attending the meeting.
6. To prevent disruptive feedback noise, members will require to have their microphones and speakers on their laptops turned off.
7. The Chair's laptop will provide the Chair with access to the on-line meeting attendees list, a view of the on-line screen and the private chat function.
8. In addition to Committee Services staff operating the Public-I system, each meeting will be supported by two committee services clerks. The duties of Clerk 1 are to advise the convener, conduct any votes and be alert to any member who wishes to speak. The duties of Clerk 2 are principally to support the convener in relation to those members and officers accessing the meeting remotely. They will alert the convener to any member accessing the meeting remotely who wishes to speak. Clerk 2 will also be responsible for circulating any amendments to be considered at the meeting.
9. Members are encouraged to send any amendments they propose to make to the Committee Services officer assisting with the circulation of amendments whose email address will be communicated to the members attending the meeting.

Ideally, the amendments should be passed to Committee Services in advance of the meeting.

10. Members attending the meeting in the Chamber will be allocated one of the available seats in the Chamber and the member must sit at the seat allocated to them.
11. The Convener has the power to determine whether any meeting of the Joint Board should be conducted remotely using the Teams platform.

D. At the Start of the Meeting

1. The Chair will announce that the meeting will be recorded on Microsoft Teams and that the recording will be made available on the Renfrewshire Council's website following meetings.
2. The Clerk will establish how many members are present in the Chamber and how many members are accessing the meeting remotely.
3. The Clerk will also establish and state which officers (other than the officers operating the system) are present in the Chamber.

E. During the Meeting

1. Members must comply with any advice in place regarding Covid-19 to protect the health and safety of those attending or supporting the meeting.
2. Members present in the Chamber must activate their microphones when speaking. Failing to do so will mean that their contribution will not be picked up on the recording and those attending the meeting remotely will not be able to hear what is being said.
3. All motions and amendments intimated during the meeting should be by email although the Chair may instruct that a motion or amendment is set out in the on-line meeting chat. The Chair may also request that the proposer of any motion or amendment reads their motion or amendment out for the purpose of informing those watching remotely.
4. Hard copy motions or amendments should not be circulated in the Chamber unless all members attending the meeting are present in the Chamber.

F. Contingency

1. Where it was intended to use the Public-I system for a meeting but for any reason it is not possible to use that system, the meeting will be adjourned until such time as the Convener may decide to enable a Teams meeting to be set up. Once reconvened, the meeting shall then proceed as a remote meeting on the Teams platform and the procedures for holding a meeting using Teams shall apply.