

# Government Consultation on Enabling Remote Attendance and Proxy Voting at Local Authority Meetings

## Response from Hampstead Norreys Parish Council

**Question 1: In what capacity are you responding to this consultation?**

A council body

**Question 2: Do you agree with the broad principle of granting local authorities powers to allow remote attendance at formal meetings?**

Yes

**Question 3: If you answered 'yes' to question 2, do you think that there should be specific limitations on remote attendance?**

a) Any formal meeting allowing remote attendance should have at least two thirds of members in physical attendance.

c) There should be no limitations placed upon councils with regard to setting arrangements for remote attendance of council meetings, up to and including full remote attendance.

**Question 4: If you are an elected member, can you anticipate that you personally may seek to attend some of your council meetings remotely?**

N/A

**Question 4a: If you answered 'no' to question 4, please explain your answer below:**

N/A

**Question 4b: If you answered 'yes' to question 4, please indicate below which of the following options best describes your likely pattern of attending meetings remotely:**

N/A

**Question 5: If you are responding to this consultation on behalf of a council as a whole, what proportion of the council's current elected members are likely to seek to attend council meetings remotely over the course of a year?**

Less than 10%

**Question 6: The government recognises that there may be cases in which it is necessary for councils to hold meetings fully remotely. Do you think there should be limitations placed on the number of fully remote meetings councils should be able to hold?**

- a) Councils should be required to publish a list of attendees joining the meeting remotely and give notice if a meeting is being held with full remote attendance.
- b) Councils should be required to ensure that standard constitutional arrangements are followed for hybrid and fully remote meetings.
- c) Councils should be required to make arrangements to ensure restricted items (where a council decision is taken in private to protect confidentiality) are managed appropriately and to require remotely attending members to join from a private location.

**Question 7: Do you think there are there any necessary procedural measures that would help to ensure a remote or hybrid attendance policy is workable and efficient?**

- a) Councils should be required to publish a list of attendees joining the meeting remotely and give notice if a meeting is being held with full remote attendance.
- b) Councils should be required to ensure that standard constitutional arrangements are followed for hybrid and fully remote meetings.
- c) Councils should be required to make arrangements to ensure restricted items (where a council decision is taken in private to protect confidentiality) are managed appropriately and to require remotely attending members to join from a private location.

**Question 8: Do you think legislative change to allow councillors to attend local authority meetings remotely should or should not be considered for the following reasons?**

Should be considered because it is a positive modernising measure.

Should be considered because it would likely increase the diversity of people willing and able to stand for election in their local area, making councils more representative of the communities they serve.

Should be considered because Councils would be more resilient in the event of local or national emergencies which prevent in-person attendance.

**Question 9: In your view, would allowing councillors to attend formal local authority meetings remotely according to their needs particularly benefit or disadvantage individuals with protected characteristics? For example, those with disabilities or caring responsibilities.**

It would benefit members

**Question 10: In addition to provisions allowing for remote attendance, do you consider that it would be helpful to introduce proxy voting?**

Unsure

**Question 11: If yes, for which of the following reasons which may prohibit a member's participation in council meetings do you consider it would be appropriate?**

Physical or medical conditions caring responsibilities parental leave or other responsibilities

**Question 12: Are there circumstances in which you feel proxy voting would not be appropriate?**

No response

**Question 13: If you think proxy voting is appropriate, are there any limitations you think should be placed upon it?**

No response