

CHICHESTER HARBOUR CONSERVANCY

PROTOCOL FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS

Introduction

This protocol applies to all virtual meetings, including but not limited to, platforms such as Microsoft Teams/Skype, Zoom Video Communications, Google Duo/Hangouts, and Cisco Webex. Although Officers are also increasingly participating in virtual meetings with external partners, this protocol has been principally prepared for the benefit of the Conservancy's internal meetings.

The following in-person meetings are regularly convened by the Conservancy:

- Conservancy Board – Meeting Held in Public (Part 1), Closed Meeting (Part 2)
- Advisory Committee – Closed Meeting
- Annual Joint Meeting– Closed Meeting
- Finance, Risk and Audit Group– Closed Meeting
- Human Resources Sub-Committee– Closed Meeting
- Planning Committee – Meeting Held in Public

Insofar as is possible, the aim of the virtual meeting is to recreate the same professional standards as an in-person meeting. This protocol should be used in conjunction with the Members Code of Conduct and Conservancy Team Handbook.

'Participants' include Members, Officers, and other ad-hoc attendees.

Security, Confidentiality and Data Protection

Participants should ensure that their Internet connection is reasonably secure (i.e. not open access Wi-Fi) and the router is protected with a strong password. It is the responsibility of each participant to safeguard the software being used to operate the virtual meeting. Please install the latest security updates as and when they are released.

The location used for the meeting should be private, minimising background distractions. Participants are reminded that non-participants (e.g. family members) must not be present during any of the Closed Meetings.

Participants are advised that a laptop or desktop computer generally works better for virtual meetings than a tablet or mobile telephone. This is because the monitor screen enables a 'gallery view' so all participants can be collectively viewed. PowerPoint presentations from Officers will also be easier to view on a monitor screen.

Should any participant require additional IT equipment, please contact the Executive Officer for assistance.

Recording Meetings

Meetings may be recorded if, for example, the minute taker is unavailable. In these circumstances, the Chairman will ask the participants if they are content for the meeting to be recorded. If the motion is accepted, the recording will commence. The recording will be deleted once the minutes have been approved as a true and accurate record.

For Meetings Held in Public

Meetings Held in Public must be available to the public to attend. At the Conservancy, this is achieved by providing external participants wishing to attend the virtual meeting with

the ID and password in advance and on request. They will also be asked to adhere to the above security procedures and made aware of the meeting etiquette, where relevant.

Joining instructions for the meeting will be provided on the Conservancy's website at least 5 days in advance.

Meeting Etiquette

As per in-person meetings, participants are advised to arrive a few minutes in advance and be ready to promptly start business on-time. Participants are asked to draw any special requirements they have to the attention of the Chairman before the meeting starts.

Every virtual meeting must have an appointed Chairman and Vice Chairman. This is for continuity reasons in-case the Chairman loses his or her Internet connection.

Participants are asked to mute their microphone if they are not speaking. This is to avoid an echo, which would detrimentally affect all participants.

If a participant wishes to speak, he or she should raise a hand. If the Chairman does not see the participant, it is acceptable for others to bring that person to his or her attention.

For the benefit of the Chairman, the video function is to remain on for all participants. Furthermore, participants are advised that those who rely on lip reading for communication will require the video option to be enabled.

Participants should be prepared for the Chairman to go through minutes page-by-page (rather than minute-by-minute), once for accuracy, and then again for matters arising.

Voting

When taking a vote, the Chairman may ask for a collective show of hands. In many cases this will be sufficient. If required, the Chairman may also ask each participant to state his or her position. Either way, at the conclusion, the Chairman or Executive Officer will announce the result of the vote.

Arrivals and Departures

If any participant joins after the meeting has commenced, or leaves the meeting, this must be announced by the Chairman or the Executive Officer.

If a participant temporarily leaves the meeting for any given reason (e.g. an unstable Internet connection) and they miss the crux of the subsequent discussion, at the discretion of the Chairman they may forego their voting rights for that item.

If the Chairman unexpectedly leaves the meeting, the Vice Chairman will assume responsibilities until such time as the Chairman returns. If both the Chairman and the Vice Chairman simultaneously lose their connection for an extended period (e.g. due to a wider power cut), at the discretion of the Officers, the rest of the meeting may be postponed.

Equally, if the Officers required for the discussion lose their Internet connections for an extended period, at the discretion of the Chairman the rest of the meeting may be postponed.

Ends