

Report to: Governance, General Purposes & LGR Committee – 11 September 2025

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Report Summary	
<b>Report Title</b>	Remote Attendance at Meetings and Proxy Voting
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To update Members on the Government consultation on remote attendance at meetings.
<b>Recommendations</b>	That the Governance, General Purposes & LGR Committee note the contents of the report.
<b>Reason for Recommendations</b>	For Members to be aware of the feedback from the current makeup of Councils.

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 On 11 December 2024 the Audit & Governance Committee considered a report in relation to the Council's response to the Government consultation on remote attendance at meetings and proxy voting.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Government consultation had stemmed from a recognition that there were circumstances in which it may not always be possible for Members to attend council meetings in person.
- 1.3 The Government's intention was to amend the law to introduce provisions for remote attendance at local authority meetings and it was hoped that such flexibility would strike the right balance between in-person and remote attendance thereby encouraging a wider diversity of people will and able to stand and actively participate in local democracy.
- 1.4 The outcome of the consultation has now been published. *See background papers for a link to the full response.*

## **2.0 Proposal/Options Considered**

- 2.1 The Government is of the view that in-person authority meetings remain vital for local democracy, but that hybrid and remote attendance and proxy voting, will enable local authorities in England to develop more modern, accessible and flexible working practices.

- 2.2 They have carefully considered arguments for and against remote attendance and proxy voting and they plan to legislate to support permanent provision in relation to both policies, when parliamentary time allows.
- 2.3 On remote attendance, they plan to permit local authorities to develop their own locally appropriate policies, if they decide to hold remote meetings.
- 2.4 On proxy voting, they plan to require principal (unitary, upper and second-tier) councils to implement proxy voting schemes, to provide consistency for Members who are absent when they become a new parent, or for serious or long-term illness. They plan for this requirement to apply to meetings of full council. For all other meetings, proxy voting may be used but will not be required and substitute or pairing schemes may be more appropriate. They plan for other local authorities not listed above to be enabled but not required to implement proxy voting schemes, for any of their meetings, in the context of member absences for serious or long-term illness or becoming a new parent.
- 2.5 They plan to work collaboratively with the sector to develop clear and supportive guidance in relation to both remote attendance and proxy voting policies.
- 2.6 Implementation will require updates to the Council's Constitution, and these will be brought to Committee for consideration once the legislative changes are published, in readiness for implementation when the legislation comes into force.

### **3.0 Implications**

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations, officers have considered the following implications: Data Protection; Digital & Cyber Security; Equality & Diversity; Financial; Human Resources; Human Rights; Legal; Safeguarding & Sustainability and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

[Remote attendance and proxy voting in local authorities: consultation results and government response - GOV.UK](#)