

# EM10: Attendance at Meeting via Electronic Means

<b>Type</b>	Council	<b>Version</b>	1
<b>Approval Date</b>	9 August 2021	<b>Resolution</b>	8.1.8.21
<b>Review Date</b>	Prior to 2024	<b>Doc ID</b>	

## Background

This policy authorises members' attendance meetings via audio or audio-visual conferencing system and outlines the responsibilities associated with utilising a conferencing system.

## Scope

This policy relates to elected and appointed member attendance at Council meetings and committees.

## Legislative References

Sections 95(3)(a) and 98(3)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2019* (the Act) require Council to adopt a policy regarding attendance at meetings via an audio or audio-visual conferencing system if Council wishes to allow members to attend meetings remotely.

Section 95(3) relates to council members; section 98(3)(a) relates to audit committee members and council committee members.

## Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

**meeting** includes any meeting of council or council committee.

**member** means a member of council or council committee.

## Policy Objectives

Council is committed to facilitate access and participation in meetings by permitting members to be present and participate remotely via audio or audio-visual conferencing system if specific needs arise.

## Application of Policy

### Attendance

It is preferable that members attend meetings in person and members are encouraged to do so where possible. However, a member may attend a meeting via audio or audio-visual conferencing system.

Except in cases of emergency, members will give at least 3 days' notice to the CEO that they intend to attend a meeting via audio or audio-visual conferencing system and the reason(s) for not being physically present at the meeting.

### **CEO responsibilities**

The CEO will ensure the provision of an adequate conferencing system and information that enables members to attend.

### **Chairing the meeting**

If the Chair is attending the meeting via audio or audio-visual conferencing system, the Chair may decide to delegate the function of chairing the meeting to the deputy, or if there is no deputy, another member.

### **General responsibilities**

A member in attendance via audio-visual conferencing system is to consider the appropriateness of their personal presentation and surrounding environment.

The Chair is to confirm which participants are present at the commencement of the meeting.

A member who is attending by audio or audio-visual means must advise the Chair if they are about to leave the meeting. A member must also advise the Chair if they re-join the meeting. These details are to be recorded in the minutes with a reference to the member's time of departure and time of return.

Meeting minutes will identify whether each member attended in person or via audio or audio-visual means.

### **Conflicts of interests**

Where a conflict is declared, the member must disconnect from the conferencing system prior to the discussion of the agenda item.

If member has disconnected from the conferencing system due to a declared conflict, the Chair will contact the member as soon as the agenda item has concluded and invite the member to re-join the meeting.

### **Confidentiality**

Members attending meetings remotely will:

- a) ensure that people in their presence who are not members cannot see, overhear or listen to the member or the meeting (unless the Council is aware and accepts the circumstances); and
- b) not record the meeting.

### **Voting**

To ensure the participation of any members attending remotely, the Chair will confirm that members attending remotely are able to hear the discussion and vote.

If a member is attending via an audio-conferencing system without video capability, the Chair is to ask for verbal confirmation of the member's vote. If a member is attending via audio-visual conferencing system, the Chair is to ask for the member's vote by show of hands or verbal confirmation.

## Revision History

<b>Policy Version</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>	<b>Resolution</b>	<b>Doc Ref</b>
v1	9/8/21	8.1.8.21	