

Remote meeting tips

These documents are a few suggestions to make meetings go as smoothly as possible. Some of them may be obvious to you, but they won't necessarily be obvious to everyone.

Before the meeting:

Make sure that you have turned on your computer in good time before the meeting. If there are any restarts or updates required, resolve them before the meeting, do not dismiss them to take place in the meeting. To reduce the number of required restarts your ECC laptop requires, please shut down your computer after you have finished with it every day; the updates will then take place without the need for as many urgent restarts. To do this, go to the start menu and click the power symbol at the bottom. Then select 'shut down' – pressing the 'off' button on the keyboard doesn't restart your device.

Make sure your device is fully charged before the meeting, it is best practice to keep it plugged in during the meeting, but if this isn't possible, have the charger close by in case you need it. Video meetings are battery hungry.

Consider having a second device on standby in case you face difficulties, this could be a smart phone or tablet or your own laptop. You can also use a normal telephone but it may be harder to follow the meeting if you do.

Check your broadband is working before the meeting. If you have problems with your broadband, locate yourself as close to your router as possible.

Set-up your screen view before the meeting. You will have your own preference on how you wish to operate during the meeting, and this may evolve over the coming weeks. You can:

- **Use a second device** - you can put zoom on your **smartphone** or **tablet** (or another **laptop**) and have the papers on your ECC laptop. If you do this then make sure that you have the email with the zoom link on the other device. You can get zoom from www.zoom.us or from your app store. Joining the meeting is as simple as clicking on a link in the calendar invitation of in your email, no matter what device you use.
- **Connect another screen to your laptop** - If you have the equipment at home you can connect a second screen to the laptop. That way you can watch on one screen and have the papers on another. You may even be able to connect your laptop to your home TV if you have an HDMI connection!
- **Split the screen** – for example, put zoom on the left half of your screen and the agenda on the right.

Check you have the link to join the meeting, this will usually be in your calendar, you should just need to click the link to join the meeting. You can forward this calendar invitation/ link to another device. If you have problems receiving calendar invitations, please speak to an officer in Democratic Services who will seek to support you and/or send you an email invitation as well.

Think about where you are sitting, we are finalising virtual backgrounds, but take a look at what is in your background and ensure you have no family pictures etc. on display.

If you have a noisy laptop or background noise, consider the use of headphones. If you would like a headset, please ask an officer in Democratic Services who will be able to order you a headset.

During the meeting:

If you are attending a meeting using zoom, remember that the name you type at the beginning will appear on the screen, please where possible include your name and if you are a Chairman or Vice-Chairman or a Cabinet Member include this detail too. It should look like: Cllr Firstname Surname or Cllr Firstname Surname, Chairman. You can rename yourself by clicking the three dots on your picture and selecting rename and then overtyping your name in the box that opens up. For a full Council meeting or other meetings over 30 members, we will ask you display Firstname Surname.

If you are experiencing broadband or connectivity problems, turn off your video, in the same way the video is battery hungry it is also data hungry. If you have to turn your video off, please let the Chairman or Democratic Services Team know using the chat function.

Understand how to mute your microphone. We recommend you keep it muted and only unmute when you are speaking, this will prevent background noise.

To mute and unmute yourself during a meeting you can do it using the following ways – pressing and releasing the space bar, clicking on the microphone or hovering over ‘mute’ on your picture or on the participants bar when using zoom. If you call in to a zoom meeting using the telephone you can press *6 to mute and unmute. To mute in Teams click on the microphone icon on the screen.

When using Zoom, click on the participant list at the bottom of your screen and let it open up on the right-hand side, you can then easily click ‘raise hand’ to signal that you wish to speak.

If you use the chat function, remember to carefully check who you are messaging before you send a message and don't type anything you wouldn't be happy for others to see. Chat should be used for procedural or meeting running purposes only.

If you are participating in a meeting with a Part 2 item, make sure that no one else in your household, is able to hear, see, or participate in the meeting.

If you are having connection problems, please send the officer host a zoom chat message or Teams chat to let them know. This is so that we can monitor if you drop out and “unlock” the doors of a locked meeting in zoom and support you to re-join the meeting.

Other points for consideration:

Remember that the meeting might be open to the public and that the public and press will have the option to see and hear you during the meeting and that the audio recording will be placed on our website, as usual, after the meeting.

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