

Part 4 Urgent Business

Item 4.1

<p><b>Report of:</b> Director of Law &amp; Governance</p> <p><b>Author:</b> Sean Murphy</p>	<p><b>Title:</b></p> <p><b>Protocol in respect of the conduct of Remote Planning Committee meetings (including Planning Sub-Committee meetings)</b></p>
---	---

**1. Recommendation**

- 1.1 That Planning Committee approves that the *Protocol in respect of the conduct of Remote Planning Committee meetings (including Sub-Committee meetings)* attached to this report be adopted as an addendum to Part 4K of the Council’s Constitution.

**Background**

- 1.2 In order to enable Council meetings to continue to take place during the restrictions brought about by The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) England Regulations 2020, the Government passed The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 which came into force on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April 2020 and remain law until 7 May 2021.
- 1.3 To introduce clarity on how remote Planning Committee (and Planning Sub-Committee) meetings will be governed it is recommended that Planning Committee adopts the *Protocol in respect of the conduct of Remote Planning Committee meetings (including Sub-Committee meetings)* (‘the Protocol’) appended to this report.

**Detail**

- 1.4 Article 16 of the Council’s Constitution provides that the Planning Committee and Planning Sub-Committee may agree protocols relating to the participation at meetings of the Committee, the conduct of Members in relation to planning matters and other aspects of the operation of the Committee. The Protocol should be read as an addendum to (and not a replacement of) the existing rules, processes and procedures governing the operation of Planning Committee including the Planning and Planning Sub-Committee Procedure Rules (part 4k of the Constitution), the Planning Code of Good Practice (part 5D of the Constitution) and the Members Code of Conduct. In the event of any conflict the Protocol takes precedence over other procedure rules in so far as the matter of conflict pertains to the governance of the remote meeting.

1.5 The Protocol introduces the following specific provisions:-

- 1.5.1 Allowing Applicants, Objectors, Members of Parliament and the GLA Member to submit a written statement in the place of addressing the Committee during the public speaking slot. The written statement is to be read out loud by the Committee clerk and will be limited to 450 words for those applications where 3 minutes would have been allowed and 750 for those applications where 5 minutes are allowed.
- 1.5.2 In the event that a referring Ward Member is unable to attend due to technological difficulties or as a result of sickness, they can submit a written statement too but in all other circumstances should attend the meeting virtually to make their representations.
- 1.5.3 The notification and registration requirements remain unchanged.
- 1.5.4 At present, we are only able to allow for participation during the public speaking procedure by way of written statement (except for referring Ward Members). The Protocol envisages the Council being able to take part by way of live remote participation in due course and allows for the option of submitting a pre-recorded statement (as an alternative to live participation) at that time.
- 1.5.5 In order to enable the business of the Committee to run as efficiently as possible the protocol recommends that at the point of debate Members of the Committee indicated their desire to address the committee by speaking aloud their name and the Chair will then normally select the speakers in the order in which those names are heard.
- 1.5.6 The Protocol also recommends that once the Chair considers that an item has been adequately debated, the Chair will invite a proposer and seconder to the substantive recommendation in the report and that will be voted upon first. If that motion isn't approved, the Chair will ask for a proposer and seconder in relation to any contrary motions. Prior to voting on a contrary motion officers should be given an opportunity by the Chair to comment on the reasons being put forward.
- 1.5.7 The Protocol is to be kept under review and amended and any substantive changes to be reported back to Committee for further approval.