



Protocol for Public Observation of Council Meetings held remotely (by video conferencing) pursuant to the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

The Council is committed to being open and transparent in the way decisions are made and has always welcomed public attendance and contributions at Council meetings. This protocol sets out how the Council will enable the public to observe Council meetings during the unprecedented times that the Coronavirus pandemic has brought to the operation of all local councils.

A council meeting is not a public meeting, it is a meeting conducted in public. There is no requirement in law to provide a public forum. However, to date the council has always facilitated that opportunity for members of the public to bring matters to the Council's attention and for the police and district or county councillors to present reports. Unfortunately, whilst the council will enable the public to observe meetings via the electronic platform which it publishes details of ahead of the meeting it has had to temporarily suspend the provision of a public forum.

The Council still very much wants to hear from the electorate and to engage on matters of business on the agenda. In order to do this you should submit your comments via email to admin@lowestofttowncouncil.gov.uk at least 24 hours before the meeting. Your comments will be noted as part of the meeting and you will duly receive an email acknowledgement. No question shall be repeated within a six month period.

Protocol for observing council meetings

1. The link to observe the meeting will be published on the agenda, and on the Council's website
2. The meeting will be recorded and if you are visible or audible you will be part of the recording. In most cases visual and audible inputs will not be enabled for the public.
3. Please respect that this is a meeting to conduct council business. Interjections will not be permitted and if you disrupt business in any way, including visually, you will be expelled from the meeting by the meeting host.
4. Any person observing a council (or committee) meeting can report on the proceedings of the meeting. 'Reporting' is defined as filming, photographing, audio recording, written reporting (e.g. blogging) or oral commentary (not during the meeting).
5. No confidential items of business will be transacted in public.

The above protocols is intended to enable the Council to continue to conduct its business in a transparent way whilst ensuring that there is opportunity for the electorate to observe. If you have any questions on the implementation of this protocol, please contact the Council by phoning 0330 053 6019 or email admin@lowestofttowncouncil.gov.uk