

CRAVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REMOTE COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS ETIQUETTE



This guidance is to assist those attending meetings by remote means, including by telephone conference, video conference, live webcasts, and live interactive streaming.

It is important to remember that you are attending a formal Council, Committee or Sub-Committee meeting, which will be publicly visible, so the Members' Code of Conduct (including non-voting Independent Persons and Co-opted Members) still applies, including making declarations of any interests, even though you may now be attending from your own home.

There are a few **Dos and Don'ts** below for remote meetings, which will help the meetings run smoothly:

Dos

- Prepare for the meeting – read documents and reports well in advance and send questions to the report author by e-mail in advance of the meeting;
- Check the technology – If you receive log in details and codes in advance, open these, download any software required and enable the software to have access to your microphone and camera;
- Ensure your device is fully charged and that the charger is to hand;
- Set up your camera so it is stable, pointing at your face and at a distance to show your head and part of your upper body, with reasonable lighting (from the side if possible). Be aware of your surroundings – impressions count;
- Log in to the meeting 15 minutes in advance to test for connectivity;
- Choose a quiet space where you won't be disturbed (and let others in your household know you are about to join a meeting so they know not to interrupt you);
- Switch your mobile phone onto silent and turn off any "notifications" on your device;
- Ensure any devices in your room are switched off;
- Switch your microphone on "mute" until it is your turn to speak. The host of the meeting will be able to "mute" and "unmute" meeting participants;

- Use the “raise hand” facility (or if participating by audio only, state your name clearly) and wait for the Chair to invite you to “unmute” your microphone and speak;
- Look into the camera when speaking – this helps you maintain eye contact with the others at the meeting;
- Be courteous and respectful of others at the meeting;
- Speak clearly and a little slower than you would normally;
- State the relevant page or slide number when referring to a particular document;
- Allow for a time-lag of a couple of seconds, e.g. when asking a question allow time for the person to hear and then respond;
- Dress appropriately and, for a sharp video image, avoid stripy and patterned clothes and large pieces of jewellery;
- Avoid moving around and try to keep your body movements minimal;
- Ensure no unauthorised person is present in the room or can overhear any part of the meeting which is not public (e.g. whilst confidential items are being discussed);
- Always assume when you are in your room that you can be seen and heard so it’s important not to make any off the microphone comments that could be accidentally broadcast;
- Always close down the Zoom or video conferencing meeting immediately after the Chair has closed the meeting to avoid being overheard making offline comments.

Don'ts

- Attempt to speak over or interrupt other people – please wait for the Chair to invite you to speak;
- Make distracting sounds – please turn off your microphone and notifications;
- Shout;
- Try to multi-task, e.g. checking your phone or emails, eating, personal grooming, etc;
- Cover the microphone;
- Breach your **duty of confidentiality** to the Council by allowing any unauthorised person to be present in the same room as you when the meeting discusses an exempt or confidential item.