

## **POLICY, GOVERNANCE & FINANCE COMMITTEE**

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**Date:** Monday, 26 July 2021

**Title:** Recording Equipment for Meetings

**Contact Officer:** Democratic & Legal Services Officer - Simon Wright

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### **Background**

During the Covid pandemic meetings of the Council have been held virtually however the legislation allowing such meetings has been revoked.

As part of the evaluation of how well such meetings worked the government has undertaken a consultation seeking the views of public bodies. Witney Town Council responded and indicated that the Council would support the option to have virtual or hybrid meetings for some or all meetings in the future.

Once the consultation has been assessed then any proposed changes to legislation or guidance will be published.

In the meantime officers have been tasked with looking at options for broadcasting meetings and/or allowing input to meetings virtually if that is allowed in the future.

### **Current Situation**

At present meetings are advisory committees being held virtually through the Zoom platform that allows all panellists and attendees to participate. The Council will return to in person meetings from August 2021.

Officers have contacted other Town Councils who broadcast their meetings live and a meeting was held with one authority to ascertain likely equipment requirements and any issues that need to be considered. It must be emphasised that this related to live broadcast and if, in the future, hybrid meetings are permitted then that will need more detailed investigation.

In respect of broadcasting meetings this would be relatively simple and could be facilitated through the Zoom platform and broadcast live on the Council's Facebook page. A camera would be required, together with a microphone system and software to tie it all together.

A list of likely hardware and software requirements are as follows:

- Microphones – Number would need to be finalised but two would most likely be needed as a minimum.
- Microphone stand(s)
- Small Mixer

- Audio interface – May not be required if included in mixer above.
- Audio cables
- Laptop – May be able to use an existing laptop.
- Camera – A small video camera would be required to film meetings.
- Capture card – For use with the camera.
- Software – Recording software and a programme to link the recording with the broadcasting platform would be needed.

As mentioned above if hybrid meetings are permitted in the future then there will be a need to look at how participants can dial in to and participate in meetings.

### **Environmental impact**

Having declared a Climate Change Emergency at its Council meeting on 26 June 2019 – with this in mind Councillors should have due regard to the environmental impact of any decisions they make with regard to its facilities and services it operates.

### **Risk**

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

### **Financial implications**

Indicative costs for the equipment are as follows:

Microphones - £155 each

Microphone stands - £20 each

Small Mixer - £129 each

Audio Interface - £72

Audio Cables - £40 a pair

Camera – Dependent on final requirements but approximately £300 – 350

Capture Cards - £20-40

Councillors should also be aware that there will be resource implications as an officer will be required at meetings to operate the equipment.

### **Recommendations**

Member are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. Whether to support the principle of broadcasting meetings of the Council;
2. If Recommendation 1 above is supported allocating a budget of £1000; and
3. That, a further report be presented at the next meeting if further government guidance/legislation regarding meeting arrangements is produced following the consultation.