



Victoria Academies Trust

Trustee and Academy Councillor

Virtual Meeting Attendance Policy

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1. Introduction

Any Director can attend meetings remotely under Victoria Academy Trust's Articles of Association. Article 126 states that:

Any Director shall be able to participate in meetings of the Directors by telephone or video conference provided that:

- a. he has given notice of his intention to do so detailing the telephone number on which he can be reached and/or appropriate details of the video conference suite from which he shall be taking part at the time of the meeting at least 48 hours before the meeting; and,
- b. the Directors have access to the appropriate equipment

If after all reasonable efforts, it does not prove possible for the person to participate by telephone or video conference the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

In relation to this the Board of Trustees has determined the following arrangements will apply. These arrangements. Full Board Meetings, Board Committee Meetings and meetings of Individual School's Academy Councils. The term Director in the above Article is applicable to Members, Trustees or Academy Councillors as appropriate.

2. Virtual Attendance at Face to Face Meetings

- a. Where a Trustee/ Councillor wishes to attend a meeting of the governing board by either telephone or video link, the Chair and Clerk must be notified at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting to ensure that appropriate arrangements can be made where possible.
- b. The Trustee/ Councillor will be asked their reasons for not attending the meeting in person. Their attendance virtually will be subject to (a) their appropriate location to ensure suitable privacy and (b) to the approval of the relevant board/ committee at the beginning of the meeting, although this approval will not be withheld without good reason.
- c. Where approval is withheld, the reason for this will be minuted and the Trustee/ Councillor informed immediately.
- d. Trustees/ Councillors attending the meeting either by telephone or video conference will be entitled to vote on any issue providing they have been 'present' for the whole agenda item which the vote relates to.
- e. Where a secret ballot is required this will be facilitated where possible (e.g. by taking a telephone call off speaker phone and the Trustee/ Councillor sharing their vote verbally with the clerk). Where this is not possible the Trustee/ Councillor will be required either to vote publicly or abstain.
- f. Trustees/ Councillors attending the meeting virtually will contribute to the quorum for the meeting.
- g. If the technological link is lost, they will cease to contribute to the quorum, but this will not prevent the meeting continuing in their absence unless it has become inquorate.

- h. The meeting must be chaired by a Trustee/ Councillor who is present in person.
- i. If, after all reasonable efforts, it does not prove possible for a Trustee/ Councillor to participate by telephone or video conference, the meeting may still proceed with its business provided it is otherwise quorate.

3. Virtual Meetings

- a. The scheduled meetings will be face to face meetings. However additional and extraordinary meetings can take place via telephone or video conference call as long as the usual quorum of Trustee/ Councillor is 'present' on the call.
- b. Where a meeting is taking place virtually, every effort will be made to enable all Trustees/ Councillors to access the meeting.
- c. Where a meeting is taking place virtually, the usual statutory notice arrangements will apply and all papers to be considered will be circulated at least seven days in advance of the meeting, except where the Chair has exercised his/her right to waive the usual notice in an emergency situation.
- d. Virtual meetings will be minuted in the same way as other meetings, either by the clerk being present virtually or by a Trustee/ Councillor who is present taking the minutes and these will be presented to the next meeting.
- e. Virtual meetings should not be recorded by any Trustee/ Councillor or the clerk without the approval of the board and for a specified purpose.