

Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill

AMENDMENT
TO BE MOVED
ON REPORT

After Clause 70

BARONESS MCINTOSH OF PICKERING

After Clause 70, insert the following new Clause –

“Local authorities to be allowed to meet virtually

- (1) A reference in any enactment to a meeting of a local authority is not limited to a meeting of persons all of whom, or any of whom, are present in the same place and any reference to a “place” where a meeting is held, or to be held, includes reference to more than one place including electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers.
- (2) For the purposes of any such enactment, a member of a local authority (a “member in remote attendance”) attends the meeting at any time if all of the conditions in subsection (3) are satisfied.
- (3) Those conditions are that the member in remote attendance is able at that time –
 - (a) to hear, and where practicable see, and be heard and, where practicable, seen by the other members in attendance,
 - (b) to hear, and where practicable see, and be heard and, where practicable, seen by any members of the public entitled to attend the meeting in order to exercise a right to speak at the meeting, and
 - (c) to be heard and, where practicable, seen by any other members of the public attending the meeting.
- (4) In this section any reference to a member, or a member of the public, attending a meeting includes that person attending by remote access.
- (5) The provision made in this section applies notwithstanding any prohibition or other restriction contained in the standing orders or any other rules of the authority governing the meeting and any such prohibition or restriction has no effect.
- (6) A local authority may make other standing orders and any other rules of the authority governing the meeting about remote attendance at meetings of that authority, which may include provision for –
 - (a) voting,
 - (b) member and public access to documents, and

- (c) remote access of public and press to a local authority meeting to enable them to attend or participate in that meeting by electronic means, including by telephone conference, video conference, live webcasts, and live interactive streaming.”

Member's explanatory statement

This new Clause would enable local authorities to meet virtually. It is based on regulation 5 of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, made under section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020.

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