



## **Monmouth Town Council BT Conferencing Protocol**

### **Before the meeting**

1. If appointed as Chair of the meeting, dial in using the Chair code which is 65591521 then #
2. The Chair to announce when the meeting is due to start.
3. All MTC meetings to be recorded - chair to key in \*8.  
The meeting will begin recording immediately. The recording will stop when all participants have left the meeting and the meeting is closed.
4. To ensure the names of Councillors present are known and the number members of the public in attendance is clear, do a roll call - Chair to key in #1 – followed by a participant count - Chair to key in #2
5. Use this opportunity to announce any “house rules” particularly reminding all participants to mute their lines.
  - a. Lines are muted by keying in \*6 by each individual. The line is unmuted by keying in \*6 again.
  - b. The Chair does have the option of muting all lines by keying \*5. This is the equivalent of “presentation mode” and lines can only be unmuted by the Chair keying \*5 again.
  - c. Chair to acknowledge members of the public in attendance.
  - d. Participants to be advised they will be given the option to leave the meeting in between agenda items to avoid disruption when leaving.
  - e. Participants to be asked to ensure they have endeavoured to minimise background noises and interruptions during the meeting.
  - f. Mutual respect is key to good decision making which applies to all participants including the Chair who will respect the views and rights of councillors and those members of the public who had indicated a wish to speak along with those in attendance. Participants to also respect the decisions of the Chair.
  - g. Disorderly conduct at meetings will be managed in accordance with Standing Order 2. If it is determined that a participant should be removed from the meeting due to disorderly conduct, the Chair should key \*0 and identify the disruptive participant to the operator. Once the operator has removed the participant, the Chair should lock the meeting using \*7.

### **During the meeting**

1. Chairs need to be mindful that people are on mute and time needs to be allowed to unmute the line and respond.
  - a. It takes up to 10 seconds for the line to be unmuted and for the person to respond. Chairs need to allow time before moving on to the next person or the next item.
  - b. The Chair of the meeting will determine the order in which they will ask Councillors to speak. This ensures that Councillors can be prepared to unmute their lines in readiness.

2. If someone is attending to present to the Council, the Chair should engage Presentation Mode by keying \*5. Councillors would be given the opportunity to ask questions at the end of the presentation. Councillors can unmute their lines using \*6 during Presentation Mode.
3. If in discussion there seems to be a consensus, it would be suitable to ask “all those in favour” to seek a general response. The Chair needs to ensure sufficient time is given to allow all Councillors to respond before moving on to avoid confusion.
4. If it is not clear that there is a consensus this is when each individual Councillor should be asked for their vote (not necessarily a named vote).
5. If there are public in attendance, opportunities must be given for them to leave the meeting without causing disruption by asking after each agenda item whether anyone wishes to leave the meeting until there are no members of the public left in the meeting.

### For Participants

6. Please ensure, wherever possible that you are in a space where you will not be disturbed or interrupted or where there is likely to be a lot of background noise as this can be very distracting to the meeting when you are not muted. If you are not intending to speak, you must mute yourself using \*6. If you need to speak, you must unmute using \*6 and remute yourself afterwards (again using \*6).
7. All participants need to be mindful of how clearly they are speaking and avoid, where possible, speaking over others to avoid confusion. It is also important to remain respectful to those speaking, despite potentially differing views.
8. Councillors awaiting their turn to speak on an item, should be aware when their turn is coming up so they can unmute themselves in anticipation.