

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council

Finance and General Purposes 04/06/2024

Enabling Remote Attendance, and Proxy Voting Consultation

Agenda item 24/021 5. To consider the information received on the Consultation and agree the actions to be taken.

BACKGROUND

The following email was received on 26/10/2024 from the BALC Executive:

Dear Member Councils

As you may have seen the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government are holding a consultation on enabling remote attendance, and proxy voting at local authority meetings, including parish & town council meetings. For those of you that were around at the time of Covid the Government made temporary changes to legislation for meetings to be held remotely and they operated successfully during this time. Unfortunately, unlike Wales where the legislation was extended, the legislation was not extended in England, meaning councils are currently unable to hold meetings remotely, or even allow an individual councillor to attend remotely.

The consultation does not appear to be about mandating remote meetings, but rather allowing councils the choice to hold these if they so wish and similarly allow individual councillors to attend remotely.

Giving councils the power to decide what works best for their own circumstances is welcome and will also hopefully lead to an increase in terms of diversity of councillors, allowing for people who can otherwise not easily attend council meetings due to reasons such as caring commitments, the opportunity to serve their community. We did see an increase in diversity during Covid as meetings could be held remotely.

We would therefore encourage as many of you as possible to respond to the consultation. For more details on the consultation please click here. ([Enabling remote attendance and proxy voting at local authority meetings - GOV.UK](#))

To respond to the survey please use the following link <https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-standards-and-conduct/remote-attendance-and-proxy-voting/>

Clerk 31/10/2024