Aberdeenshire COUNCIL **(Business Services)**

REPORT TO FULL COUNCIL – 29 SEPTEMBER 2022

HYBRID MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

1 Executive Summary/Recommendations

1.1 This report provides Full Council with an update on options for hybrid meetings in Council venues. Work has been undertaken during the summer recess to identify hybrid options for meeting venues across Aberdeenshire and it is proposed that a solution similar to that currently in operation in Committee Room 5 is explored for area venues in Buchan, Garioch, Kincardine and Mearns and Banff and Buchan, utilizing existing microphones and Surface Hubs with the addition of equipment to connect the two. The cost of this is estimated at £1000 per venue. A solution for Marr will continue to be investigated, but on the basis that the Committee has indicated a wish to continue to meet online it is considered that this could be reported back to Full Council at a later date. Furthermore, in light of the new office development in Ellon which will include hybrid facilities, it is proposed that no venues in Formartine are considered for hybrid arrangements at this time and the Area Committee could consider venues outwith that area if there is a wish to meet in a hybrid format.

1.2 The report also provides an update on the hybrid upgrades to the Council Chamber which were agreed by Full Council at its meeting on 29 April 2022. In light of that investment, it is suggested that meetings of Committees which previously took place in Committee Room 5 should move to the Chamber in order to take advantage of the new equipment, once installed. It is not proposed to carry out any upgrades to Committee Room 5 at this time as the current solution appears to be working well.

1.3 Finally the report seeks comments from Full Council on the future of livestreaming meetings. As meeting venues gradually begin to reopen, access to the public would remove the requirement for livestreaming.

1.4 **Full Council is recommended to:**

1.4.1 **Instruct officers to implement hybrid solutions in Buchan House, Gordon House, Viewmount and the Faithlie Centre, creating a setup that reflects what is currently in place in Committee Room 5;**

1.4.2 **Continue to explore a hybrid solution for Council owned venues in Marr;**

1.4.3 **Not take any action regarding venues in Formartine, pending the completion of the new Ellon office development;**

1.4.4 **Agree to meetings of Policy, Audit and Miscellaneous Committees taking place in the Council Chamber once upgrades to that venue are complete; and**

1.4.5 Consider and comment on the options for livestreaming Council meetings.

2   Decision Making Route

2.1   The hybrid meeting arrangements for Committee meetings have previously been considered by Full Council, most recently at its meeting on 29 April 2022 ([Item 11](#)).

2.2   On 23 September 2021, as the Covid-19 restrictions began to ease, Full Council considered options for hybrid meeting arrangements and agreed to transition to a Choice Based Blended Model for fully virtual and hybrid meetings. In practice, this means that any meeting that is held in a venue must have a hybrid option for virtual attendees. The Model does not allow for fully in person meetings, unless all participants choose to attend in person, thereby creating an in person meeting by default. On 29 April 2022 Full Council agreed to proceed with hybrid upgrades to the Council Chamber and to receive a report detailing options for all other Council venues. In the meantime Committees could agree meeting formats, including the option for hybrid where possible if supported by existing equipment.

2.3   Officers from Legal and People, IT and Property and Facilities Management have been working together to identify the options for meeting venues. Consultation has also been undertaken with Area Committees to confirm their preferences and feedback from that consultation forms **Appendix 1**.

3   Discussion

3.1   Background

3.1.1   The Council's Choice Based Blended Model for Fully Virtual and Hybrid Meetings was agreed by Full Council on 23 September 2021. In practice, the model means that some meetings are agreed to be Fully Virtual Only and others have the option of in-person attendance as a choice for members thus making it a Hybrid meeting. Committees are asked to agree meeting formats for their calendar of meetings and the majority have indicated a wish to meet in a hybrid format. It is of course the case that all participants might opt to attend a meeting in-person thus creating a fully In-Person meeting but that should be differentiated from that being compulsory.

3.1.2   There are clear benefits to Hybrid meetings, from a sustainability and equalities perspective. Travel time, mileage and costs are reduced for virtual attendees, which aligns with our Carbon Budget and the Routemap to 2030. Hybrid also ensures access to meetings for those who may otherwise be unable to attend in person and therefore promotes the public sector equality duty. This is further explored in the Integrated Impact Assessment at **Appendix 4.**

3.1.3   The list of meeting venues used pre-pandemic forms **Appendix 2**. The venues highlighted in yellow are those which fall outwith the ownership of the Council. It

is proposed that any upgrades, and therefore investment, be restricted to Council owned venues, in order to achieve best value and reduce the risk to the Council in investing in venues which are outwith our control. This means that there are currently no venues in Formartine that would support a hybrid solution, with or without upgrades, however hybrid arrangements will be put in place for the new Ellon office which is due to be completed in 2024. The current position and proposal for each of the Council meeting venues is explored in more detail below.

3.2   Woodhill House

3.2.1   *Council Chamber*

As noted above, officers have been instructed to proceed with upgrades to the Council Chamber. Soft market testing has been undertaken over the summer and a statement of requirements is currently being finalised, to enable the tender process to commence for the audio visual upgrades, which will include the installation of new microphones and tracking cameras, screens and a voting system. Meantime the installation of additional electrical and network points are progressing via the Council's HardFM framework. Ongoing supply chain issues mean it is difficult to give a timescale for completion of the works but it is hoped that the new hybrid solution will be in place for the first meeting of Full Council in January 2023. It is proposed that the Council continues to offer a temporary hybrid solution in the interim through a local supplier, which was employed successfully at the meetings of Full Council in May and June 2022.

3.2.2   *Committee Room 5*

A hybrid solution is currently offered in Committee Room 5 using existing microphones connected up to the inbuilt Surface Hub. This works well and has received positive feedback from both Members and officers. External specialists have advised that the microphones will become obsolete in the near future and will likely require replacement at a future date however to date they continue to be used without any difficulties.

In light of the investment in the Chamber, it is suggested that it may represent best value to move meetings of Policy, Audit and Miscellaneous Committees who have expressed a preference for a hybrid option to the Chamber once the upgrade works for that venue are complete, as opposed to carrying out any works to Committee Room 5 at this time. The current solution would remain available meantime in the event of any meeting clashes. Consideration could be given to replacing microphones at a future date in the event that these become unusable and after reviewing use of Committee Room 5 as a hybrid meeting space once the upgrades to the Council Chamber are complete.

Other meeting rooms

3.2.3   There are other rooms in the Members Building of Woodhill House which were on occasion used for formal meetings of Council Miscellaneous Committees/Sub-Committees pre-pandemic, namely Committee Rooms 1 and

2. However given the low demand for these rooms, and the availability of hybrid facilities in both the Chamber and Committee Room 5, these have not been included in the list of venues under consideration.

3.3 Area Venues

3.3.1 *Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee*

The Committee have held hybrid committee meetings using a Surface Hub but feedback from participants indicates some audio problems. The Committee has indicated a wish to continue with hybrid meetings therefore it is suggested that a suitable hybrid solution will have to be identified to facilitate this. It is proposed that this be explored using the existing microphones and Surface Hub with the addition of equipment to connect the two to achieve the solution currently in place in Committee Room 5.

3.3.2 *Formartine Area Committee*

Formartine Area Committee previously met in the Kirk Centre in Ellon, the Baden Powell Centre in Turriff and the Daviot Hall, all venues that are external to the Council. The Committee previously indicated a wish to continue to meet online for the remainder of 2022/2023 but may require a hybrid solution in future. The new Ellon office development will be completed in 2024 and officers have identified the need for hybrid arrangements in the meeting room as an essential element of the project. It is therefore proposed that no action is taken in respect of Formartine venues at this time. If Members wish to meet in a hybrid format at some point in future, the Committee could make use of an alternative Council venue outwith the area which does have provision for hybrid. This reflects the feedback from the Area Committee.

3.3.3 *Marr Area Committee*

Marr Area Committee had multiple venues pre-pandemic. Alford Public Hall was regularly used but is external to the Council. Both Stewarts Hall, Huntly and Banchory Town Hall are within Council ownership. Whilst the preference would be to restrict hybrid upgrades to one venue per area, there are clearly challenges in Marr due to the geographical spread of the area. As yet it has not been possible to identify a solution in a Council owned venue.

The Committee has expressed a wish to continue to meet online for the remainder of 2022/2023. It is therefore proposed that officers continue to explore portable solutions given the challenges presented in the Marr area, and the Committee's decision to continue to meet online. As with Formartine, if there was a desire to meet in a hybrid setting, alternative venues could be explored where a solution already exists.

3.3.4 *Buchan Area Committee*

Hybrid meetings in Buchan House are currently taking place with the use of a Surface Hub. Feedback from Members has so far been positive however it is

proposed that minor works are explored using the existing microphones and Surface Hub with the addition of equipment to connect the two to achieve the solution currently in place in Committee Room 5. This should improve audio quality and reduce any disruption caused by background noise.

3.3.5 *Garioch Area Committee*

The Committee has met in a hybrid format using a Surface Hub which generally worked well. However, as with Viewmount and Buchan it is proposed that works are explored to achieve the solution currently in place in Committee Room 5. Taking cognisance of the current uncertainty around office space in Inverurie and the Council's Office Space Strategy, all efforts will be made to ensure that any additional equipment required is capable of removal and installation elsewhere, should there be a change of meeting venue in Garioch.

3.3.6 *Banff and Buchan Area Committee*

Pre-pandemic, meetings of the Committee alternated between the County Hall in Banff and the Faithlie Centre in Fraserburgh. The Council has since withdrawn from the County Hall as a meeting venue and it will no longer be used going forward. Alternative options are being explored including the Deveron Centre in Banff. The Committee has indicated a wish for hybrid meetings, therefore in light of recent investment in the Faithlie Centre, it is proposed that necessary works are considered for that venue in the first instance as part of the first phase to achieve the solution currently in place in Committee Room 5.

3.3.7 The estimated costs of achieving a hybrid solution in Buchan House, Gordon House, Viewmount and the Faithlie Centre are minimal and estimated to be **£1000 per venue**. It should be noted that this figure has been revised subsequent to consultation with Area Committees. This proposal is considered to both represent best value to the Council and meet an identified need for hybrid solutions in the areas at the current time. Feedback to date from the Area Committees confirms that Members would be seeking a hybrid option in the area. It is therefore necessary to ensure that this can be facilitated within existing Council venues.

3.3.8 Officers are confident that the solution in Committee Room 5 can be implemented in the aforementioned venues, however if it cannot be achieved a further report will come forward to Full Council with alternative solutions. It is likely that an external audio visual specialist would be required as part of those investigations to assess and provide advice on what may be required.

3.4 Livestreaming

3.4.1 Currently, all meetings of the Council and its Committees are livestreamed where possible. For fully online meetings this is a legal requirement to ensure public access to meetings in the absence of a meeting venue. Following the removal of Covid-19 restrictions, members of the public could again have access to a meeting venue, therefore the same legal requirement would not

apply to hybrid meetings. Some Area Committees have allowed the public access whilst others have chosen not to do so as yet to ensure the risk of interruption from background noise can be minimized.

3.4.2   Pre-pandemic, only meetings of Full Council, Policy and Audit Committees were livestreamed through an external provider, Public-I, and using equipment installed in Committee Room 5 and the Council Chamber. The contract with Public-I was terminated during lockdown due to lack of use. Since the onset of lockdown, meetings have been livestreamed via Microsoft Teams Live. A recording of the meeting is subsequently made available on YouTube.

3.4.3   Livestreaming via Microsoft Teams Live has had a marked impact on staffing resources. In addition to the Committee Officer clerking the meeting, another officer must manage the livestreaming on a laptop, which requires constant monitoring and adjustment throughout the meeting. Pre-pandemic the livestream of the meeting would be wholly managed by the external supplier, requiring an Officer to simply carry out a short equipment test prior to the meeting. The Committee Officer clerking would then start, pause and end the stream using a tablet device.

3.4.4   As part of the tender process for the Council Chamber, officers are investigating whether there are external options for livestreaming, or whether livestreaming via Microsoft Teams Live will continue to be an option. In the meantime livestreaming of all other Committees is continuing via Microsoft Teams Live.

3.4.5   A summary of recent viewing figures for livestreams and recordings of Full Council, Policy and Audit Committee forms **Appendix 3**.

3.4.6   Given that there will no longer be a legal requirement to livestream hybrid meetings if the public are again allowed access to meeting venues, and taking into account the impact on staffing resources, it is suggested that it would be appropriate to seek the views of Full Council on the existing arrangements for livestreaming to ascertain whether these remain a requirement for the following meeting groups:-

(i)   Full Council
(ii)   Policy and Audit Committees
(iii)   Miscellaneous Committees
(iv)   Area Committees

3.4.7   There are clear benefits to livestreaming in terms of accessibility to meetings and transparency around the decision making process, however these require to be weighed against the ongoing impact on staffing resources.

4 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk

4.1 This report supports delivery of the Council's Six Priorities by ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for Committee meetings, and the underlying principle of right people, right places, right time.

Pillar	Priority
Our People	Education Health & Wellbeing
Our Environment	Infrastructure Resilient Communities
Our Economy	Economy & Enterprise Estate Modernisation

4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is (are) agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial	X		
Staffing	X		
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland	[IIA attached as Appendix 4]		
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing			X
Climate Change and Sustainability	IIA attached as Appendix 4		
Health and Wellbeing			X
Town Centre First			X

4.3 There will be financial implications in the installation of any additional equipment required in area venues to create the solution currently in place in Committee Room 5 but these are minimal and it is considered that the costs can be met within existing resources. There would also be ongoing staffing implications in the livestreaming of meetings which are outlined in the report.

4.4 The integrated impact assessment presented to Full Council in September 2021 remains relevant and is included at Appendix 4. It confirms that there is a positive impact in terms of sustainability in making provision for hybrid meetings, as well as on disability and pregnancy and maternity in the promotion of accessibility to meetings.

4.5 The following Risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level (*Corporate Risk Register).*:

ACORP004 – Business and Organisational Transformation
ACORP006 – Reputational Management

ACORP009 – Operational Risk Management (including health and safety)

No risks have been identified at a Directorate Level.

5   Scheme of Governance

5.1   The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and had no comments to make and are satisfied that the report complies with the <u>Scheme of Governance</u> and relevant legislation.

5.2   Full Council is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of the <u>List of Committee Powers in Part 2A</u> of the Scheme of Governance as the Council's meeting arrangements are not a matter delegated to any Committee of the Council.

Ritchie Johnson, Director of Business Services

Report prepared by Ruth O'Hare, Legal Service Manager (Governance)
Date 30 August 2022

List of Appendices –
Appendix 1 – Comments from Area Committees
Appendix 2 – List of Council Meeting Venues
Appendix 3 – Livestreaming figures
Appendix 4 – Integrated Impact Assessment

Appendix 1 – Comments from Area Committees

This appendix details the comments made by area committees for consideration by Council.

Banff & Buchan Area Committee

The Committee agreed :-

(1)   to note the outcome of the hybrid testing in the Faithlie Centre, Fraserburgh;

(2)   to note that there is not currently a venue in the Banff and Buchan area able to fully support a hybrid meeting;

(3)   to express an ambition to return to face-to-face meetings at the earliest opportunity, potentially for alternating meetings;

(4)   that, subject to the successful addressing of the infrastructure challenges at the Faithlie Centre can be addressed, this be agreed, in the short term, as a single venue for Banff and Buchan; and

(5)   that there was no demonstrable need for Live Steaming to be stopped.

Buchan Area Committee

The Committee agreed to make following comments to Full Council on the future arrangements for hybrid meetings of the Buchan Area Committee -

(1) to confirm that Members are satisfied with the hybrid set-up that is currently in-place for the meetings of the Buchan Area Committee,

(2) in light of the current system working well, that there be minimal spend (up to £250) on additional resources,

(3) in recognising the additional staffing resources required for livestreaming meetings, that detail of viewing figures be included in the report to Full Council, and that should the viewing figures not justify the additional resources required for livestreaming to consider if it is sufficient to post recordings of the meetings only, and

(4) to recommend that the general public be permitted to again attend meetings of the BAC in-person

Agreed to thank the Area Team for their work involved to date to ensure the smooth running and delivery of the BAC meetings

Garioch Area Committee

The comments made by Garioch Area Committee were

(1) That there is no desire to spend a lot of money on equipment provision for Gordon House and that portable equipment that can be used in more than one location would be preferable.
(2) Noted the significant benefit to officers in not having to travel to or wait at meetings.

(3) Welcomed the return of the public to meetings however expressed a concern about the management of background noise.

(4) Content for live streaming to cease if the public were able to return.

Marr Area Committee

The Committee agreed to provide the following comments to Full Council:-

Online meetings were viewed to be working well in Marr. Reference was made to benefits in relation to the challenging geographic spread of Marr, attendance in winter weather, reduced mileage costs and facilitating childcare.
Keen for livestreaming and meeting recordings to continue for transparency and giving members of the public opportunities to view the Committee.
To suggest promoting use of libraries for watching the livestream.
Decisions on how to meet should be for each Area Committee, taking into account their different circumstances.
The additional cost of a hybrid solution in Marr would be difficult to justify when the virtual solution works well.

Formartine Area Committee

The Committee made the following comments:

a) Some members preferred the option to meet in person whilst others welcomed the option to partake online,
b) Further discussion was required around live-streaming and whether this was required in addition to the recording of meetings,
c) It would be helpful to have further detail on how many people accessed the Committee meetings using the live-stream, and
d) The proposed new build office in Ellon should be developed to allow hybrid meetings.

In summary, the Committee agreed to remain online but to have some in-person hybrid meetings, depending on the agenda. Gordon House was the preferred venue for any hybrid meetings, should the venue be available.

Kincardine and Mearns Area Committees

The Committee highlighted the issues regarding background noise being picked up from those in the room, making listening online very difficult.
The Committee would be supportive of minimum cost to try and improve the audio.
The Committee would be supported of having members of the public able to attend meetings and a recording of the meeting being available as soon as reasonably possible afterwards.
The Committee suggested links to the recording should be easy to find on the website, suggested a link from meetings recordings to highlight the link to the recording, currently saved alongside the agenda pack.

Appendix 2 – Council Meeting venues pre-pandemic

Meeting Group	Meeting Venue
Full Council	Council Chamber
Audit, Policy and Sustainability Committees	Committee Room 5
Buchan Area Committee	Buchan House
Garioch Area Committee	Gordon House
Kincardine and Mearns Area Committee	Viewmount
Banff and Buchan Area Committee	Faithlie Centre, Fraserburgh
Marr Area Committee	Alford Public Hall
Marr Area Committee	Stewart's Hall, Huntly
Marr Area Committee	Banchory Town Hall, Banchory
Formartine Area Committee	Kirk Centre, Ellon
Formartine Area Committee	Baden Powell Centre, Turriff
Formartine Area Committee	Daviot Hall

Appendix 3 – Live Stream Figures

Area Committees

Committee	Date	Live Stream	YouTube	Date	Live Stream	YouTube	Date	Live Stream	YouTube
Banff & Buchan	31.05.22	20		21.6.22	20		30.08.22	50	
Buchan	7.6.22	27	59	28.6.22	13		06.09.22	30	
Formartine	14.06.22	42		19.7.22	0		23.08.22	40	
Garioch	6.9.22	52							
Marr	31.05.22	33	101	21.06.22	14	101	30.08.22	32	62
Kincardine and Mearns	08.02.22	56		26.04.22	22		14.06.22	33	

These figures include Council Officers watching on the live stream or waiting to join the meeting to present.

Policy Committee

Meeting Date	Meeting	Live Stream Views	YouTube Views
19-May-22	Full Council - morning	180	189
01-Jun-22	Integration Joint Board	42	135
08-Jun-22	Infrastructure Services – morning	77	76
08-Jun-22	Infrastructure Services - afternoon	51	90
09-Jun-22	Education and Children's Services - morning	27	68
09-Jun-22	Education and Children's Services - afternoon	20	64
15-Jun-22	Sustainability - morning	21	42
16-Jun-22	Communities - morning	32	45
16-Jun-22	Communities - afternoon	24	43
20-Jun-22	Integration Joint Board Audit	3	26
23-Jun-22	Business Services Committee - morning	13	51
23-Jun-22	Business Services Committee - afternoon	17	130

Meeting Date	Meeting	Live Stream Views	YouTube Views
24-Jun-22	Local Review Body - morning	20	20
24-Jun-22	Local Review Body - afternoon	11	38
29-Jun-22	Audit - morning	29	64
29-Jun-22	Audit - afternoon	18	38
30-Jun-22	Full Council - morning	60	161
29-Jul-22	Local Review Body - morning	14	45
24-Aug-22	Integration Joint Board	21	57
25-Aug-22	Infrastructure Services Committee	48	90
26-Aug-22	Local Review Body – morning	12	22
31-Aug-22	Procedures	7	24
01-Sep-22	Education and Children's Services - morning	38	57
01-Sep-22	Education and Children's Services - afternoon	10	54
02-Sep-22	Licensing Sub-Committee	5	36
08-Sep-22	Communities Committee – morning	25	43
08-Sep-22	Communities Committee - afternoon	10	35

Aberdeenshire Council

Integrated Impact Assessment

Choice-based Blended Model for Hybrid and Fully Virtual Meetings

Assessment ID	IIA-000141
Lead Author	Ruth O'Hare
Additional Authors	Ann Riddell
Service Reviewers	Ann Riddell, Lauren Cowie
Subject Matter Experts	Claudia Cowie, Lynne Gravener
Approved By	Karen Wiles
Approved On	Tuesday September 14, 2021
Publication Date	Tuesday September 14, 2021

1. Overview

This document has been generated from information entered into the Integrated Impact Assessment system.

This assessment arises from a report to Full Council on the future of meetings for the Council and it's Committees.

During screening 3 of 10 questions indicated that detailed assessments were required, the screening questions and their answers are listed in the next section. This led to 2 out of 5 detailed impact assessments being completed. The assessments required are:

- Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty
- Sustainability and Climate Change

In total there are 3 positive impacts as part of this activity. There are 0 negative impacts, all impacts have been mitigated.

A detailed action plan with 1 points has been provided.

This assessment has been approved by karen.wiles@aberdeenshire.gov.uk.

The remainder of this document sets out the details of all completed impact assessments.

2. Screening

Could your activity / proposal / policy cause an impact in one (or more) of the identified town centres?	No
Would this activity / proposal / policy have consequences for the health and wellbeing of the population in the affected communities?	No
Does the activity / proposal / policy have the potential to affect greenhouse gas emissions (CO2e) in the Council or community and / or the procurement, use or disposal of physical resources?	Yes
Does the activity / proposal / policy have the potential to affect the resilience to extreme weather events and/or a changing climate of Aberdeenshire Council or community?	No
Does the activity / proposal / policy have the potential to affect the environment, wildlife or biodiversity?	Yes
Does the activity / proposal / policy have an impact on people and / or groups with protected characteristics?	Yes
Is this activity / proposal / policy of strategic importance for the council?	No
Does this activity / proposal / policy reduce inequality of outcome?	No
Does this activity / proposal / policy have an impact on children / young people's rights?	No
Does this activity / proposal / policy have an impact on children / young people's wellbeing?	No

3. Impact Assessments

Children's Rights and Wellbeing	Not Required
Climate Change and Sustainability	No Negative Impacts Identified
Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty	No Negative Impacts Identified
Health Inequalities	Not Required
Town Centre's First	Not Required

4. Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment

4.1. Protected Groups

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Age (Younger)		Yes		
Age (Older)		Yes		
Disability	Yes			
Race		Yes		
Religion or Belief		Yes		
Sex		Yes		
Pregnancy and Maternity	Yes			
Sexual Orientation		Yes		
Gender Reassignment		Yes		
Marriage or Civil Partnership		Yes		

4.2. Socio-economic Groups

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Low income		Yes		
Low wealth		Yes		
Material deprivation		Yes		
Area deprivation		Yes		
Socioeconomic background		Yes		

4.3. Positive Impacts

Impact Area	Impact
Disability	There will be a positive impact in allowing for virtual attendance at Committee meetings, resulting in increased accessibility for those who can't access meeting venues.
Pregnancy and Maternity	There will be a positive impact on the protected group through increased accessibility to meetings. The option to attend virtually will reduce the need for travel and possibly the need for childcare.

4.4. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
External Data	Feedback from participants	Positive feedback from participants in Fully Virtual meetings	The opportunity to join a meeting virtually is welcomed by members of the public, and will promote accessibility

4.5. Engagement with affected groups
Consultation with Elected Members; feedback from Members of the public.

4.6. Ensuring engagement with protected groups
Through the aforementioned consultation.

4.7. Evidence of engagement
Surveys have been carried out and the results are appended to the report. Workshops were also held with Elected Members In June.

4.8. Overall Outcome
No Negative Impacts Identified.

There will be a positive impact on maternity, as new mothers will be able to join meetings virtually, without having to travel.

4.9. Improving Relations
N/A

4.10. Opportunities of Equality
Providing a hybrid option for meetings will allow any person to attend virtually, thereby increasing accessibility to meetings. It is intended that meetings will be livestreamed therefore any member of the public will be able to view a meeting of a Council Committee without having to travel to a meeting venue.

5. Sustainability and Climate Change Impact Assessment

5.1. Emissions and Resources

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Consumption of energy		Yes		
Energy efficiency		Yes		
Energy source		Yes		
Low carbon transition	Yes			
Consumption of physical resources		Yes		
Waste and circularity		Yes		
Circular economy transition		Yes		
Economic and social transition		Yes		

5.2. Biodiversity and Resilience

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Quality of environment		Yes		
Quantity of environment		Yes		
Wildlife and biodiversity		Yes		
Infrastructure resilience		Yes		
Council resilience		Yes		
Community resilience		Yes		
Adaptation		Yes		

5.3. Positive Impacts

Impact Area	Impact
Low carbon transition	There will be a positive impact in the reduction of travel time to meeting venues through allowing for hybrid options and Fully Virtual.

5.4. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
Internal Data	Statistics from the Sustainability Team	There will be a carbon reduction in reducing the number of in person meetings	The reduction of in person meetings will contribute to the Council's carbon budget aims.

5.5. Overall Outcome
No Negative Impacts Identified.

Holding hybrid and Fully Virtual meetings will have a positive impact on the Council's climate change aspirations.

6. Action Plan

Planned Action	Details	
Promote accessibility of meetings to members of the public	**Lead Officer**	Ruth O'Hare
	Repeating Activity	No
	Planned Start	Thursday September 23, 2021
	Planned Finish	Friday October 29, 2021
	Expected Outcome	Increased participation at meetings
	Resource Implications	None