

# **VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL MULTI-LOCATION MEETINGS POLICY**

The Multi-Location Meetings Policy has been prepared having regard to the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance on multi-location meetings issued by Welsh Government June and July 2023 and amended in August 2023

This Policy is in addition to the Council's Procedure Rules as contained within the Council's Constitution.

Updated December 2023





# MULTI-LOCATION MEETINGS POLICY

## Introduction

Under the Coronavirus Act 2020, Welsh Ministers issued Regulations (The Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020, ‘the 2020 Meeting Regulations’) which temporarily relaxed the rules for Local Authority meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020 Meeting Regulations were intended to enable Councils to safely continue to discharge their functions during the pandemic, whilst adhering to public health restrictions and guidance.

The provisions of the 2020 Meeting Regulations ended on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and were replaced by new provisions for Local Authority meetings made under the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 (“the Act”), some of which were to take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021 and others from 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

In August 2021, Welsh Government published Interim Statutory Guidance on Multi-Location Meetings which can be found at:

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-08/interim-statutory-guidance-on-multi-location-meetings.pdf>

Welsh Government have since published final guidance, (June and July 2023 and amended in August 2023) namely, the Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance on Democracy within Principal Councils which can be found [via the link](#). This MLM Policy has therefore been revised having regard to this guidance.

## 1. What is a Multi-Location Meeting?

- 1.1 A Multi-Location Meeting (MLM) is a meeting whose participants are not all in the same physical place. Some of the participants may be physically located in the meeting venue whilst others join from their home or other remote location.
- 1.2 Under the Act Welsh Government provisions confer on Local Authorities duties to convene MLMs to enable greater accessibility and public participation in the Local Government decision making process.
- 1.3 Section 47 of the Act required Local Authorities to make and publish arrangements that ensure that Local Authority meetings are able to be held by means of any equipment or other facility which enables meeting participants who are not in the same place to attend the meetings and be able to speak to and hear each other. (This provision came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2021 and the Council’s Policy for this provision was approved under an Emergency Power in April 2021 and inserted into the Council’s Constitution.)
- 1.4 However, from 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022 meeting participants must not only be able to speak to and hear each other but for meetings which are required to be broadcast under Section 46 of the Act participants actively taking part in the meeting must also be able to see and be seen by each other.

- 1.5 When considering arrangements for MLMs or Remote attendance the Authority will also have regard to Welsh Government guidance and / or regulations issued by Welsh Ministers.
- 1.6 Section 2 of Welsh Government's Interim Statutory Guidance sets out a number of principles to guide Authorities when developing their meeting arrangements which are transparency, accessibility, good conduct, Welsh Language, local needs and future generations. The Guidance also confirms that the meeting arrangements should be reflected in the procedure rules set out in the Council's Constitution.

## **2. Broadcasting of Meetings**

- 2.1 Section 46 of the Act requires that the Authority shall ensure that meetings of a Principal Council (paragraph 21.2 refers) are broadcast live and are available to view electronically save for when the meeting is not open to the public (Part II – confidential or exempt information). The livestreaming of the meeting shall be published on the Council's website and archived thereafter for future viewing. The Statutory and Non-Statutory guidance at page 160 states Principal Councils must make arrangements for broadcasting certain meetings live, and ensuring that broadcasts are available electronically afterwards.

## **3. Notice of a Meeting**

- 3.1 The Authority will ensure that the relevant information shall be included on the Notice of the Meeting (Agenda) advising how the Committee Members, Officers and the public may attend the meeting.
- 3.2 The Act requires that Notices of Meetings and electronic information relating to meetings (i.e. including notices of meetings, agendas, reports and background papers) must be published on the Council's website and must remain available in an electronic format and be available for a minimum of six years following the date of the meeting.

## **4. Agendas, Reports, Decision Notices, Minutes and Background Papers**

- 4.1 Agendas, Reports, Decision Notices and Minutes of formal meetings will be published on the Authority's website. A small number of hard copies shall be available to members of the public physically attending a meeting. Agenda papers are available at least five clear days (which includes weekends) prior to a meeting.
- 4.2 Decision Notices of a meeting (that came into effect under the Act in May 2021) must show decisions made; names of those present; apologies; declarations of interest and outcome of any votes and must be published on

the Authority's website within seven working days of the meeting taking place, including the day of the meeting.

- 4.3 From May 2021 background papers must have also been published on the Authority's website.
- 4.4 There is no longer a requirement to post Notices of Meetings at the Council's offices (although the Vale Council has continued this practice to assist the public). However, hard copies of agendas and reports must be available for the public if meetings are held physically and the Council is also required to make public access provision for members of the public who cannot access documents, for example by providing access to computers, limited copies of documents at meetings or via a fee or making documents available for inspection.

## **5. How are Physical or Multi-Location Meetings (MLMs) Conducted?**

- 5.1 MLMs are meetings of the Council or its Committees whose participants are not all in the same physical place. Such meetings can either be held:
  - Hybrid – with some participants joining through remote means and some attending physically in the same place as others; or
  - Entirely Remote – whereby all participants are taking part via remote means.
- 5.2 Hybrid Meetings – will be conducted and broadcasted via the Council's hybrid meeting solution provider, from the Civic Offices (save for confidential matters).
- 5.3 Remote only meetings – will also be conducted via its Hybrid meeting solution provider and broadcast live via OBS software through YouTube (save for confidential matters).
- 5.4 Entirely physical meetings – will usually be held in the Council Chamber at the Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry and broadcast via the Council's Hybrid meeting solution provider, (save for confidential matters).
- 5.5 Meetings of the Council will be conducted in line with the Council's Code of Conduct for Members at Section 19 of the Council's Constitution and the Conduct of Members – The Principles at Appendix 1 to Section 19.

## **6. How Can I Participate or Observe a Council Meeting?**

- 6.1 A participant at a meeting with the Vale of Glamorgan Council is defined within the statutory guidance as a person who takes an active part in the meeting. They may be an Elected Member, a Co-Opted Member (with or without voting rights), an officer of the Authority, a person giving evidence to a Committee as a witness, a person who has registered to speak at a

Committee (in accordance with Council procedures), someone presenting a question at a Full Council meeting (under the Council's procedure) or a representative from an outside organisation on a Committee. [[View Public Speaking Guides](#)]

- 6.2 A member of the public, not participating in a meeting, will be able to observe a meeting by either attending in person where a physical or Hybrid meeting is taking place and/or observing a Remote or Hybrid meeting. An observer at a meeting is defined in the Statutory Guidance as a member of an audience, or otherwise spectating who may be in the same room that a meeting is taking place or they may be observing by remote means.
- 6.3 With regard to observing Remote / Hybrid meetings online members of the public will be able to view a meeting by accessing the link to the meeting on the Council's website. If a meeting is held on a hybrid basis members of the public would be able to attend the meeting physically. Members of the public who do not have access to the internet to view remote meetings can request to attend a public viewing in a suitable location in the Civic Offices by contacting Democratic Services **not later than one working day before the date of the meeting** e.g. if the meeting is held on a Monday Democratic Services to be notified no later than the preceding Friday.
- 6.4 Councillors are encouraged to bring their Council devices to physical meetings so that they can view the agenda papers online.
- 6.5 A member of the public wishing to speak at a Council meeting where public speaking is allowed, is required to complete the online registration process **at least three working days prior to the date of the meeting**.
- 6.6 For Elected / Co-opted Members of the Council, when appointed, a survey will be undertaken to ascertain individual language preferences at meetings of Committees of which they are Members.
- 6.7 Where expert witnesses are invited to attend meetings their language preference will be identified by Democratic Services when attendance arrangements are made.

## 7. Quorum

- 7.1 The quorum of a meeting is one quarter of the voting Members unless specified otherwise within the Council's Constitution. The quorum shall include those attending Remotely, at a Multi-Location or physically; providing they are able to speak and be heard by each other and to see and be seen by others when actively participating in proceedings.
- 7.2 If the numbers present fall below the quorum required, the meeting ends immediately.

7.3 Apologies for absence by an Elected Member for a meeting can be accepted by Democratic Services up to the publication of the Decision Notice for the meeting i.e. up to seven days from the meeting (the seven days will include the day of the meeting as per the Act).

## **8. Withdrawal from a Meeting due to a Prejudicial Interest**

8.1 Should an Elected Member declare a Prejudicial Interest at a Physical, Multi-Location or Remote meeting, the Member must withdraw from the meeting unless they have obtained a dispensation from the Council's Standards Committee. However, where Members of the public are able to speak at a meeting, the Elected Member can also remain to make their representations but must leave after their representations are made. (For further information on declarations of interests at meetings see the Council's Constitution.)

8.2 The Elected Member will be invited back into the meeting once the item relating to the prejudicial item has concluded. The Democratic Services Officer supporting the meeting will notify the Elected Member to rejoin the meeting by an agreed means either by email, text message or by sending a separate link for the Member to rejoin the meeting. Should that person not respond to the call to re-join, the meeting will continue without them, providing it is quorate.

## **9. Voting at meetings**

9.1 Where there is no dissent at a meeting certain action will be resolved without a vote being recorded.

9.2 Where a vote is required voting will either take place electronically, via a roll call or a mixture of both should technical difficulties arise with voting electronically.

9.3 All voting results will be announced by either the Chair, the Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer or the Democratic Services Officer before moving to the next item of business.

9.4 Should a Member leave the room and not return, their vote will not be able to be provided by another Member. However, if the voting device or audio on the laptop is unavailable the Member may use the message facility in the Remote software to relay their vote to the Chair.

9.5 Should a recorded vote be requested in accordance with paragraph 4.24.5 of the Council's Constitution, as mentioned in 9.2 above voting will either take place electronically, via a roll call or a mixture of both should technical difficulties arise with voting electronically.

9.6 In both a Hybrid or Remote meeting the vote will be carried out electronically and the names of those voting for, against or abstaining will be automatically

recorded. In the event of technical difficulties during the meeting if a physical roll call of votes is taken this will be undertaken by the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Democratic Services Officer at Full Council and for any other meeting by the Democratic Services Officer.

9.7 If a Member cannot initially be contacted to provide their vote, the officer will return to the Member and following a second attempt, if no response is received and the meeting remains quorate, the Member will be considered not present for that part of the meeting.

9.8 Remote attendees **should** only use the chat facility in the software system to:

- Alert the Chair they wish to speak; or
- If their audio fails to advise of the vote they wish to make.

It is also important to note that any information recorded in the chat facility will be a matter of public record which may be subject to a Freedom of Information request.

N.B. When using the Hybrid meeting solution Members are required to activate the “Request to Speak” button which will add them to the speaking queue managed by the Chair and / or Democratic Services Officer. The above voting procedures are in addition to the procedures outlined in paragraph 4.24 of the Council’s Constitution.

9.9 The chat facility **is not to be used for discussions** as all discussions must be made verbally in the meeting for the sake of individuals observing the meeting and / or the meeting recording if a recording is being made.

## **10. How Will Exempt Matters be Dealt With?**

10.1 The Chair of the meeting shall inform the public when the meeting is moving into private session (Part II). The recording must cease before any discussion on the item commences. The Democratic Services Officer will confirm with the Chair when the recording has been stopped.

## **11. Multi-Location / Remote Attendance – Is a Member “Present”?**

11.1 Multi-Location and Remote meetings provide additional challenges in terms of meeting attendance. There are a variety of circumstances in which this might become an issue e.g. taking of votes, loss of connection (WiFi or mobile).

11.2 To be considered present, the Member must be able to speak **and be heard and to see and be seen by others if the meeting is broadcasted (this will include roll call and when providing any declarations of interest)**. At a meeting the Monitoring Officer and / or Democratic Services Officer shall provide advice to the Chair in respect of the local determination and will consider issues such as temporary interruptions associated with connection



issues. The Chair's decision will be final (pages 178-179 of the statutory guidance refer).

- 11.3 Any failure in technology / connectivity which results in Members' loss of contact during the meeting shall not invalidate any part of the deliberations or any vote taken. The Chair of the Committee may adjourn the meeting if they consider appropriate whilst any technical issues are resolved.
- N.B. Meeting platforms operated by the Council have a participants list function which demonstrates to the Chair and Democratic Services Officer which participants are connected to the meeting at any given time.

## **12. Public Questions at Council and Public Speaking Procedures**

- 12.1 Should a member of the public or an organisation wish to ask a question at Full Council meetings they must give notice in line with the Council's procedure which can be found at [https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Council-Structure/Public-Participation-at-Council-Meetings.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/Public-Participation-at-Council-Meetings.aspx)
- 12.2 A member of the public or an organisation may ask only one question under Rule 12.1 per Ordinary Council meeting.
- 12.3 Public speaking procedures for Committees (where procedures are in place) can also be found at: [https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Council-Structure/Public-Participation-at-Council-Meetings.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Council-Structure/Public-Participation-at-Council-Meetings.aspx)

## **13. Formality and Privacy at Meetings**

- 13.1 When attending Remote or Hybrid meetings (MLMs) Elected Members and any participants must ensure that the room from which they are accessing the meeting is secure and must ensure that the door of the room is closed so that no disturbance occurs during the course of the meeting as it is important to ensure a degree of formality in the proceedings.
- 13.2 Participants are encouraged to use a suitable "corporate" background. ("Corporate" background images will be made available to Members for their use.) Remember that as proceedings will be live, viewers will effectively be able to view you working in your home.
- 13.3 Members are reminded of their responsibilities under the Members' Code of Conduct during meetings and in particular when considering exempt items during a meeting. Members should ensure that they cannot be overheard during discussions around confidential information. Members should consider the use of headphones for such meetings and make sure that they plan ahead.

## **14. Etiquette at Remote / Multi-Location Meetings**

14.1 Good Conduct (page 162 refers) of Welsh Government's Statutory and Non-Statutory guidance states that in line with the Nolan Principles, MLMs, as with any other public meeting, should demonstrate high standards of conduct. The Nolan Principles were added to in the Statutory Instrument The Conduct of Members (Principles) (Wales) Order 2001 and these, as mentioned in paragraph 5.5 of the Council's Code of Conduct for Members, can be found at Section 19 of the Council's Constitution and the Conduct of Members – The Principles at Appendix 1 to Section 19.

14.2 Participants should:

- (i) Dress appropriately for the meeting;
- (ii) Ensure that their microphone is muted if not speaking;
- (iii) Respect the Chair and others present;
- (iv) Behave appropriately and be mindful of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (v) Use the chat facility appropriately;
- (vi) Use headphones, where appropriate to avoid background noise;
- (vii) Ensure their name/ and or title e.g. Councillor "John Williams" is displayed on screen;
- (viii) Ensure that the equipment being used has sufficient battery charge for the duration of the meeting or is plugged into a mains power point;
- (ix) Join the meeting at least fifteen minutes before the meeting is due to start to check audio and video arrangements.

14.3 Disruptive Behaviour – If a member of the public interrupts proceedings, the Chair will warn the person concerned (Section 4.28 Council Constitution). If they continue to interrupt, the Chair will order their removal from the meeting. With regard to Elected Members, the procedure outlined within the Council's Constitution will apply (see Section 4.27).

15. All formal meetings will be facilitated by a Democratic Services Officer.

16. The following ICT equipment will be required by participants for Hybrid and Remote meetings –

- Microphones / Headsets;
- Cameras – if meeting is broadcasted;
- High speed Internet access; and
- Access to the relevant software (Chrome - internet browser) being used for the meeting.

(N.B. Council laptops and headsets have already been provided to all members and Co-Opted members and this equipment should be used for meeting attendance.)

## **17. Viewing and Attending a Meeting Links**

- 17.1 For members of the public wishing to view the meeting the link to the agenda and to the broadcasting of the meeting will be available on the Council's website.
- 17.2 A link to the meeting will be sent to participants attending irrespective of whether the meeting will be undertaken via Hybrid or Remote means.

## **18. Calendar of Meetings**

- 18.1 The Council's Calendar of Meetings is agreed by Cabinet on an annual basis and can be found on the Council's website at [[Council Meetings](#)]. The Calendar will also include details of the time of the meeting. However, meetings can be subject to change or additional meetings included in the Calendar by the Chair of a Committee and / or the Chief Executive, as and when required. For details of the venues or whether meetings will be held via Hybrid or Remote means members of the public are requested to view the agenda papers online once published in advance of the meeting (see Section 4 above).
- 18.2 Following Local Government Elections the Council will have the opportunity to determine the most suitable date and time for meetings to take place. The Council will also be able to consider each Municipal year if deemed appropriate which meetings will be held predominantly physically, Remotely or Hybrid and also have regard to the Council's Diversity Action Plan.

## **19. Invitations to Meetings for Participants**

- 19.1 Invitations will be provided to all meeting participants electronically, and the invitation will detail whether the meeting will be Hybrid or Remote.
- For meetings taking place on the Council's meeting software solution participants will receive a link to their email address (Elected and Co-opted Members to their Vale of Glamorgan email address.) Please note the invitation is unique to the individual and should not be forwarded to another person as it will prevent you from accessing the meeting.
- 19.2 Prior to meetings Democratic Services Officers who support each of the Council Committees will also get in touch with registered speakers and / or witnesses to provide assistance if required.
- N.B. All participants are advised to contact Democratic Services at [Democratic@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) or telephone 01446 709855 at least 48 hours before the meeting should they require assistance prior to the meeting.

## **20. Record of Attendance**

- 20.1 The attendance of each Committee member will be recorded by the Democratic Services Officer supporting the Committee. These records will be combined or added to the Decision Notice and minutes of the meeting and published on the Council's website.
- 20.2 Committee members are to inform Democratic Services no later than seven days after the meeting (including the day of the meeting) in order that apologies can be recorded in the Decision Notice and thereafter the minutes of the meeting.

## **21. Broadcasting of Meetings**

- 21.1 The broadcasting of meetings does not replace the formal record of the meeting and together with the decisions taken will be published on the Council's website and retained in hard copy in accordance with the Council's retention policy.
- 21.2 Having regard to section 46 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 the meetings to be conducted and broadcast on a Hybrid basis, (excluding those items that are confidential / exempt in nature) are Full Council, Cabinet, Planning, Governance and Audit Committee meetings and all Scrutiny Committee meetings \*\*. NB. The Statutory and Non-Statutory guidance requires Principal Councils (Part 3 1.50) to broadcast meetings of the Full Council live as they happen. However, the Vale of Glamorgan Council has agreed to include the broadcasting of further meetings, as outlined above. The guidance also states that a failure to comply with this requirement will not necessarily make any proceedings invalid.

**\*\* N.B. Following consideration of a recommendation by the Democratic Services Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2023 it was agreed by Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2023 that all Scrutiny Committees be undertaken on a Hybrid basis subject to a six month trial period.**

- 21.3 Other Committee meetings (including the Annual Meeting) will be conducted and broadcast on a Remote basis (excluding those items that are confidential / exempt in nature) or unless determined otherwise by the Chair of the relevant Committee in conjunction with the Chief Executive (or nominated deputy in their absence). Some meetings such as the Senior Management Appointment Committee may be conducted on an 'in person' basis (e.g. where interviews are being conducted) and the decision as to whether to hold such a meeting "in person" to be taken by the Chair of the Committee in conjunction with the Chief Executive.

N.B. All Committee meetings will be undertaken, as outlined above, and those to be broadcasted live will be broadcasted on the Council's website and for all meetings the recordings will be uploaded thereafter for future viewing on the Council's website save for confidential matters.

21.4 All agendas on the Council's website will clearly state whether the meetings will be held via Hybrid or Remote means.

## **22. Online Meeting Platforms**

22.1 The Council's Hybrid meeting provider will provide the platform for all meetings of the Council.

N.B. Members are responsible for ensuring access to adequate high-speed internet when joining remotely. Advice can be provided on minimum standards where required. **The Council accepts no responsibility should a Member choose to use a personal device and encounters connectivity issues prior to or during a meeting they wish to attend.**

## **23. Attendance at Meetings Whilst out of the Country**

23.1 Members wishing to attend meetings whilst out of the Country and using their own personal or Vale of Glamorgan Council devices will be able to do so by accessing free Wifi facilities as the Council will not be able to reimburse costs. However, to enable access to meetings on Vale laptops abroad Members will be required to notify the ICT Service Desk and / or Democratic Services at least **two weeks** prior to departure so that the necessary security measures that will be required can be put in place on the device in time.

23.2 Should Members wish to access meetings using mobile phones, due to the cost of international calls the Council would not be able to reimburse call costs with access via phones personal or otherwise then being a matter for the Member.

23.3 Technical support on any Council supported devices whilst abroad will not be able to be provided by the Council's ICT or Democratic Services Officers.

## **24. Confidential and Exempt Information (Part II)**

24.1 Some information, in accordance with Legislation, may not be able to be made publicly available. This is known as confidential or exempt information (Part II). When such information is to be considered at a formal meeting the documents will only be made available to those entitled to view them on the Council's internal network. Such matters are usually scheduled at the end of an agenda in order to minimise any inconvenience to observers who will be required to leave the meeting prior to the items being considered. The Chair will request that members of the public and press are excluded from the meeting (whether the meeting is being held by Remote or Hybrid means) before continuing with the agenda. Any recording of the meeting will also cease.

24.2 If a meeting is being broadcast the recording will be paused and a notification displayed on the broadcast that the meeting is no longer open to the public.

## **25. Training**

25.1 All Members and officers will receive training to be able to participate at meetings which will include the use of the meeting platform software for joining Remote meetings and the use of the conferencing microphones in the Council Offices for Hybrid meetings. Other participants will also receive support from Democratic Services regarding how to access the meeting.

## **26. Support for Meetings**

26.1 In the first instance support for meetings will be provided by Democratic Services Officers who will ensure the following:

- Agendas to be emailed electronically (at least 5 clear days, which includes weekends, before the meeting);
- Monitor attendance at Remote meetings and will assist any participant to join or re-join the meeting;
- Facilitate the meeting, voting and take the minutes of the meeting. (Voting at the meeting will be undertaken in adherence to the requirements of the Council's Constitution and in line with Section 4.17.3.9 of this Policy)
- Facilitate the recording and livestreaming of meetings (in conjunction with an ICT officer).

## **Privacy Notice for Democratic and Scrutiny Services**

(This Privacy Notice is supplemental to the Council's Corporate Privacy Notice linked below)

[https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our\\_council/Website-Privacy-Notice.aspx](https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/Website-Privacy-Notice.aspx)

This Privacy Notice is specifically for Democratic and Scrutiny Services.

Democratic and Scrutiny Services provides support and administration for the Council's Committee system in order for it to operate effectively.

In particular it:

- Organises and schedules meetings,
- Decides whether the meeting will be public,
- Issues public notices in relation to the meeting,
- Invites individuals to attend,
- Deals with correspondence received in relation to the business of the meeting,

- Deals with queries in relation to business of the meeting,
- Takes minutes of the relevant meeting,
- Issues agenda papers and minutes,
- Deals with any other issue relevant to the business of the meeting,
- Arranges for the retention of documents and reports relating to the Committee.

In the context of this notice the word meeting includes:

- Council meeting
- Council Sub Committee meeting
- Scrutiny Committee
- Scrutiny Sub Committee meeting
- Education Appeals Committee
- Governance and Audit Committee
- Any other meeting supported by Democratic and Scrutiny Services.

In order to promote open Government and Democracy most of the Council's meetings are held in public and accordingly anything discussed at those meetings will be public and any minutes, recordings or webcasts will also be public. There are some circumstances however where it is not appropriate for matters to be discussed in public, for instance the personal business of individuals or information that is financially / commercially sensitive. The agenda of the meeting will make it clear how information is to be treated.

Accordingly, if:

- you are submitting information to be discussed at a Committee, or
- you are attending a Committee to speak, or
- you are submitting documents to a Committee, or
- you are submitting petitions to a Committee,
- you are submitting representations to a Committee,
- you are submitting or providing documents / petitions on behalf of others;

this information will be dealt with openly and in public unless the meeting, or part of the meeting, discussing it is not held in public in accordance with the exempt information provisions in the Council's Constitution.

If you are obtaining information from third parties, you need to ensure that they understand the above and **consent** to their information to be put into the public domain. The Council may ask you to confirm this, and information may not be further published unless we are satisfied that third parties have been made aware of this.

### **How do we collect information from you?**

We collect information from you when you visit [www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](http://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk). Also, when you contact us in writing, speak to us on the phone, email or talk to us face to face.

## **What types of information do we collect from you?**

In order to provide the service, the Council may need to process some or all of the following categories of personal information about members of the public or Elected Members:

- Name and title
- Address
- Contact number
- Email address
- Comments in relation to Council business
- Special requirements to access meetings, including speaking in Welsh.

## **How is your information used?**

In accordance with our public tasks the following applies:

- To be used at the meeting as set out above and where necessary names and comments made recorded in the minutes,
- When registering to speak at Committees, members of the public's details will be entered into a Council computer database.
- Any registrations to speak at Committee meetings and any information submitted to Councillors and Democratic and Scrutiny Services may be shared with Council Officers and affiliated partners (e.g. organisations the Council works with collaboratively to deliver services) for their professional observation and consideration.
- Any written correspondence received may be kept on file for future reference by the Council.
- Enable Members or Officers of the Council to investigate or assist with any issues which you may have raised. Also, so we can notify you of any updates.
- Refer your public representations across Committees in order to inform decision making.
- If your express permission is given, share with other members of the public who have registered to speak in order to nominate a spokesperson.

## **Who has access to your information?**

We will generally only share personal data with Vale of Glamorgan Council staff or Elected Members who need it to perform their functions. However, as outlined above, if discussed in a public meeting the information will be publicly available.

In addition, we may rely on a number of exemptions, which allow us to share information without needing to identify a lawful basis for the sharing and without needing to provide you with information about the sharing.



## **Lawful bases**

Our **lawful bases** for processing your personal information are:

- Consent.
- The processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out by us in the public interest or in the exercise of authority vested in us.
- The processing is necessary in order to protect your vital interests or those of another individual.
- The processing is necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which we are subject.

## **What are your rights in relation to the personal data we process?**

- **Access** – you can request copies of any of your personal information held by the Council.
- **Rectification** – you can ask us to correct any incorrect information.
- **Deletion** – you can ask us to delete your personal information. The Council can refuse to delete information if we have a lawful reason to keep this.
- **Portability** - you can ask us to transfer your personal data to different services or to you.
- **Right to object or restrict data processing** – you have the right to object to how your data is being used and how it is going to be used in the future.
- **Right to prevent automatic decisions** – you have the right to challenge a decision that affects you that has been made automatically without human intervention.

## **How long will we keep your information for?**

We keep and dispose of all records in line with our record retention schedule.

Please contact the Democratic and Scrutiny Services Department on 01446 709 855 or [Democratic@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) for further information.

## **What security precautions are in place to protect the loss, misuse or alteration of your information?**

We are strongly committed to data security and will take reasonable and appropriate steps to protect your personal information from unauthorised access, loss, misuse, alteration or corruption. We have put in place physical, electronic and managerial procedures to safeguard the information you provide to us. However, we cannot guarantee the security of any information you transmit to us. We recommend you take every precaution to protect your personal information.

## **Broadcasting**

Please note that certain meetings of the Vale of Glamorgan Council will be broadcast, (as referred to in paragraph 21.2 above) you will be informed verbally if

the meeting you are at will be. If it is then this means that you are being recorded both visually and in sound and that is made available on the internet. This is done for the purposes of supporting and promoting democratic engagement and public interest. We will retain the data for 6 years and then offer it to the archivist at the Glamorgan Records Office for permanent retention. You have the right to apply to access, rectify, restrict, object or erase this data.

## **Complaints**

If you would like to make a complaint regarding the use of your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer:

**By post:** Freedom of Information Unit  
Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4RU.

**By phone:** 01446 700111.

**By email:** [DPO@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:DPO@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

For independent advice about data protection, privacy, and data sharing issues, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

For further information regarding this procedure please contact:

Democratic Services via email – [Democratic@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

Address: Vale of Glamorgan Council, Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4RU

Phone Number: 01446 709855

N.B. This policy is in addition to the Council's [Remote Meeting Procedures](#) / Rules that can be found on the Council's website (and the Council's Procedure Rules as contained within the Constitution).